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# JAPANESE SWORD-MOUNTS

IN THE COLLECTIONS OF  
FIELD MUSEUM

BY

HELEN C. GUNSAULUS

Assistant Curator of Japanese Ethnology

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61 Plates

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BERTHOLD LAUFER

Curator of Anthropology



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## PREFACE

In June, 1916, Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus presented to Field Museum of Natural History a collection of 919 Japanese sword-mounts, among these 746 sword-guards and 173 examples of sword-furniture. The nucleus of this collection had been formed by Edward Greey, who first visited Japan in 1854, completing his collection in 1886. In course of time, other specimens were added by Dr. Gunsaulus from such notable collections as that of Alfred Beit of London and Justus Brinkmann of Hamburg. Dr. Gunsaulus' valuable gift to the Museum was accompanied by 1,793 negatives of sword-guards (the obverse and reverse of each having been taken), a catalogue in manuscript prepared by his daughter, Miss Helen C. Gunsaulus, after many years of earnest study of the subject, as well as by a fine series of books pertaining to Japanese art.

In 1917 the entire collection of sword-fittings was placed on exhibition in the old museum building, arranged in two cases on narrow shelves in such a manner that each object could be plainly viewed and studied from both sides. This is essential, as the majority of sword-guards are decorated or inscribed on both the obverse and reverse.

In 1919, Miss Helen C. Gunsaulus was appointed assistant curator of Japanese ethnology in this Museum, and revised completely the catalogue of the sword-fittings. She devoted more than two years to a thorough study of the entire subject, the results of which are embodied in this publication.

The collection is now re-installed in Frank W. Gunsaulus Hall, which was opened on the 5th of August, 1922. A selective method has been adopted, only 228 guards and 118 smaller mounts having been chosen for exhibition. The remainder of the collection has been classified and deposited in a cabinet in office 51 on the third floor, where it is available for students.

Despite the important contributions which have been made to this subject by such able students as the late Marquis de Tressan and Henri Joly, it is hoped that this volume, by its compact and critical presentation of the material at hand and the addition of novel information in respect to the metal craftsmen, will prove of interest and make an appeal to the students of Japan, as well as the ethnologists and folklorists in general.

The signatures appearing on the sword-mounts, names of artists, families, and localities, have been arranged in an alphabetical index with

Chinese characters It is hoped that this index will be a useful and convenient instrumentality to the reader and to those who may be endeavoring to catalogue or arrange for exhibition purposes examples of this craft.

The illustrations are all selected from specimens in the Gunsaulus collection, with the exception of those reproduced in Plates I and II, for which credit is due to the Brooklyn Institute Museum, Brooklyn, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

It is a matter of profound regret that Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus, who made this collection and followed with keen interest every step made in the progress of its study, has not been allowed to live to see this work completed.

B. LAUFER.



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# JAPANESE SWORD-MOUNTS

BY HELEN C. GUNSAULUS

## INTRODUCTION

In 1876, there was issued in Japan the edict known as the Haitorei regulation, by order of which the samurai were commanded to relinquish the privilege of wearing two swords,—“an outward evidence that distinguished men of their order from common toilers after gain.” In consequence of this act there soon appeared in the markets of Europe the remarkably fitted weapons which now are among the most admired testimonials to the outside world of what Japan is and has been in the field of art and craftsmanship.

It is estimated that in 1877 there were approximately two millions of samurai, the descendants or followers of a calling which had existed from the tenth to the nineteenth century. When we consider that for these hundreds of years armorers and metal craftsmen had labored to produce the finest weapon, we are not surprised at the calculation that at this time there were five million blades, many of which had been handed down as the cherished defenders of several generations. Nor should the number of sword-fittings be difficult to account for. Whereas a samurai might possess one trusted blade, he more than likely would have four or five sets of fittings which would be adjusted for different occasions. “Added to this large number are those which were made for merchants who, becoming prosperous during the Tokugawa shōgunate (1603-1868), established the custom of wearing a sword by the side of the *koshisage* (writing outfit) in their belts.”<sup>1</sup>

This, in a measure, accounts for the many replicas and imitations that are to be found everywhere, as does also the fact that collections of sword-fittings have existed in Japan since the sixteenth century, and collectors in Europe have augmented the production of *shiiremono* (“ready-made articles”) ever since the early days when Nagasaki was the only outlet for Japanese culture.

In estimating the extent to which the sword was used, it must be remembered that the wearing of a sword was the general practice of the common people regulated by many prohibitions issued from time to

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<sup>1</sup> M. DE TRESSAN, L'Évolution de la garde de sabre japonaise (*Bull. Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol. XXV, p. 43).



time and quoted in detail by H. JOLY.<sup>1</sup> The Buddhist priesthood must likewise be taken into account.<sup>2</sup> Though the farseeing Yoritomo, in the twelfth century, had curbed the strength of the Buddhist priests, his followers, more lax in their methods, allowed Buddhist militarism to grow to an enormous degree. In the early fourteenth century, supporting the Emperor Go Daigo, the bonzes made a desperate assault against the Hōjō rulers. Finally, in the sixteenth century, they had accumulated such military power and wealth in estates that Nobunaga, realizing the menace of their organization, attacked the monasteries which by this time were practically fortresses filled with priests, equipped with weapons and armor, fighting among themselves as rival sects or siding with any warring faction which could win their support. The monasteries of Hiyeisan and Hongwanji were fired in 1571 and 1579, respectively, and in those bitter struggles thousands of warrior priests fell; Buddhism as a militant force was fatally struck.

From the fifth to the sixteenth century, Japan had no real period of peace; wars foreign, civil, or religious, clan clashes and conquests had developed a military organization of great complexity with its own cult, "the religion of loyalty" (*bushidō*), "the *noblesse oblige* of the warrior class."<sup>3</sup> "The soul of the samurai" is a happy characterization applied to the sword and familiar to all who are students of old Japan. The short outline of the development of feudalism which follows will readily help in establishing the truth of this expression, and may not be amiss in this study in accounting for the many different schools of metal workers who decorated the sword, and who gained a place among the artists of the ages from their products in this craft alone. Following the historical events one by one there may be traced the steps in the transition of the decorations on the sword, from those found on a purely fighting weapon to those which appear finally on the ornamental sword of the nineteenth century.

Though feudalism came into full form under Yoritomo, the founder of the shōgunate in the late twelfth century, the germs of this system had long been existent before this period, as I. NITOBE states in the first chapter of his book "Bushidō." The original unit of the social organization was the clan, composed of persons claiming descent from a

<sup>1</sup> The Sword and Same, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> See K. ASAKAWA, Life of a Monastic Shō in Mediæval Japan (*Annual Rep. of American Hist. Assn.*, Vol. I, pp. 311-342), especially notes 78, 97, 103, 120.

<sup>3</sup> I. NITOBE, *Bushidō*, p. 4.



common ancestor, and through this bond establishing an individual ancestor worship.<sup>1</sup>

K. ASAKAWA,<sup>2</sup> in his scientific study of the social organism prior to the reform of 645, pictures in detail the quasi-patriarchal, quasi-tribal organization over which the emperor, claiming descent from the Sun Goddess, Amaterasu, ruled. Stating the situation in LAFCADIO HEARN'S<sup>3</sup> words, disputes between the clans were undoubtedly frequent; and gradually the most powerful clan group dominated over the whole number, its special cult becoming the national religion. This was the worship of the Goddess of the Sun from whom the supreme ruler, the Mikado, claimed descent.<sup>4</sup>

Though the clans had this common tradition expressed in the worship of the emperor, they retained their independent organizations and deities. The clan remained the real unit of society until the Meiji era, witness the power of the Fujiwara, Taira, Minamoto, Hōjō, and Ashikaga families from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries, as well as the influence of the Satsuma and Chōshū clans immediately before the overthrow of the Tokugawa shōgunate in 1868.

During the fifth and sixth centuries, certain clan heads were rising so rapidly in power that the imperial authority was in danger of being overshadowed. Accounts in the Nihongi of the struggles between the Mononobe and Soga families<sup>5</sup> vividly portray the unsettled conditions surrounding the royal palace. The introduction of Buddhism into Japan in A.D. 552 and the acceptance of the new religion by the emperor in 587 were deciding factors in the establishment of the power of the Soga family who fostered Buddhism and supported the emperor, at the same time opposing the Mononobe and Nakatomi who were opposed to the new creed. During the half century preceding the reform of 645, the Soga family reigned supreme, usurping the government of the land in many ways.<sup>6</sup> Finally the younger Soga was murdered in the presence of the empress, and the elder Soga shortly after was executed.

When, in 645, the power of the Soga family came to an end, the

<sup>1</sup> W. ASTON (Shintō, p. 46) prefers the terminology "pseudo-ancestor worship" in the recognition of nature deities, clearly differentiating between ancestor worship so-called and the Shintō adoption of ancestral gods.

<sup>2</sup> The Early Institutional Life of Japan, pp. 32, 59-66.

<sup>3</sup> Japan, An Interpretation, p. 262.

<sup>4</sup> It is interesting to observe in this connection that through all the centuries even the most bitter enemies of the emperor have acknowledged him to be the only legitimate ruler, the son of Heaven and the direct descendant of the Sun Goddess.

<sup>5</sup> W. ASTON, Nihongi, Vol. II, pp. 105-115.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 178, 182, 183, 189, 191, 193.

emperor, determined to insure his authority, adopted the Chinese system of government, along with the higher learning and many of the arts which had naturally come over to Japan in the train of Buddhism. The reform of 645 outlined in detail by K. ASAKAWA in "The Early Institutional Life of Japan" would, as he says, have amounted to a revolution, had not the emperor himself accomplished the deed. "The fundamental principle of society was changed from a quasi-patriarchism which had consistently ruled nearly all the institutions of the nation, to a form of the state in which a uniform law directly controlled all the subjects, who were sharply separated into two classes, one ruling over the other and in return being supported by it."<sup>1</sup>

The emperor regrouped all of the clan families into eight new castes, thus creating new orders of nobility and changing the form of government from simple feudalism to centralized monarchy with eight departments of state. Society was divided into two classes,—the governing, including all nobles, and the military; and the producing comprising the farmers, artisans and merchants. This great gulf between the people and the political power endured until 1868. The producing class was the nation itself; the governing class was a nation within a nation, apart and all powerful. In the seventh century the emperor was sovereign over all, in truth, as well as name.

"All lands privately held by local lords and all people subjected to group chieftains were decreed to be henceforth public and free and subject only to the emperor. The designation of local lords and group chieftains were allowed to be kept by those who had formerly possessed them, but only as mere titles. . . . In lands thus made public, provinces were established and governors appointed. Under those governors served the local lords and group chieftains as secretaries of various official grades or as district governors, all salaried, paid in natural products, of course, since no currency existed at that time."<sup>2</sup>

This statement is quoted in full, for it was the public lands here referred to, which were soon encroached upon by warriors in the field and by the Fujiwara nobles, who from the seventh century on held almost all the important offices at court, accumulating such control that the title of *kwambaku* (literally, "the bolt inside the gate," but meaning "to represent the Mikado") was bestowed upon Fujiwara Mototsune in A.D. 888.<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after the introduction of Buddhism, the rôle of the emperor

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<sup>1</sup> K. ASAKAWA, *The Early Institutional Life of Japan*, p. 323.

<sup>2</sup> K. HARA, *Introduction to the History of Japan*, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> W. GRIFFIS, *Mikado's Empire*, Vol. I, p. 110.



changed from supreme ruler to cloistered sovereign. The Fujiwara chiefs used the interest in the new religion as a tool for the increase of their own dominion. On their advice, many of the emperors, after ruling for a short time, some at the early ages of five and ten years, retired from active life, shaved their heads, and became Buddhist monks, leaving the administration in the hands of ministers who readily relegated more and more authority unto themselves. The *kwambaku* was regent during the minority of the emperor; and this power, coupled with the fact that the wives of the ruler were ever chosen from this family, gave the Fujiwara unlimited sway. So closely hedged in by etiquette that no subject save the wives and concubines saw him, the emperor soon became the mere puppet in the hands of the ministers. The court life of this period developed into a luxurious pastime. "The mode of life of the Mikados was not such as to make them able rulers. They passed their time surrounded only by women and priests, oscillating between indolence and debauchery, between poet-tasting and gorgeous temple-services. This was the brilliant age of Japanese classical literature which lived and moved and had its being in the atmosphere of an effeminate court."<sup>1</sup>

In this rich ground the seeds of feudalism took deep root. While the Fujiwara had monopolized the offices of the palace in Kyōto, the two great families, the Taira and Minamoto, who traced their lineage to the emperor, as did the Fujiwara, had constantly filled the military positions. The Minamoto warriors had subdued the Ainu and the warring tribes in the east and north; the descendants of the Taira clan had had the same pronounced success in the west and south. After the storm of war, in the peaceful quietude which ensued, these two clans, both jealous of the dictation of the effeminate Fujiwara, became hated rivals, and each strove to possess the imperial palace.

According to GRIFFIS,<sup>2</sup> prior to A.D. 645, all subjects of the Mikado had to serve in the field, but under Fujiwara dictation the allurements of the court were such that the civilians at Nara or Kyōto were only too willing to grant the title of *shōgun* to those who would go forth to subjugate the barbarians and quiet the warring tribes. The *shōgun* was commander-in-chief in early times appointed by the emperor. At a later date, this same generalissimo was simply the most powerful of the *daimyō*, his office becoming an hereditary usurpation of power. The claims of reward made by the chieftains who had brought the country to order, were repeatedly rejected and ignored. Being opened by the

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<sup>1</sup> B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Things Japanese*, 5th ed., p. 232.

<sup>2</sup> *The Japanese Nation in Evolution*, pp. 180-206.

Fujiwara regent, none of them reached the emperor. Having gained great prestige and power in the provinces where they had been the sole representatives of the government, the warrior leaders, after receiving nothing from the capital, determined to reward their followers with grants of land, knowing that they were ever able to back their claims with the sword. Added to this feudalization of the country, the Fujiwara regents granted offices as civil functionaries over conquered districts to the host of imperial princes, sons of the sovereign's numerous wives. They in time seized the land, and also became masters of huge domains. In A.D. 986 the Fujiwara clan controlled over two hundred houses of dependent families. The military and nobility were exempt from taxes, and the peasants who were stripped of their land were soon ground down to a most miserable state. The private landed estates, which thus sprang up over the country, as it was rapidly being opened up, are known as *shō*; and, since they later came almost entirely under the control of the warrior classes, are of particular interest from the point of view of this study. Again quoting K. ASAKAWA,<sup>1</sup> "it was the *shō* that overthrew the Japanese state-system reconstructed in the seventh century." Owing to the growing luxury of the court and its devotion to the Buddhist church, the government encouraged the private cultivation of land, intending that the benefit should go to the common people in place of the local magnates or court nobles who took advantage of the situation. The next step was the granting of large tracts, known as "temple lands," to the Buddhist temples which were not to be taxed. Added to these stretches of land immune from taxation were the "imperial lands,"—grants freely disposed of by the emperor to members of the royal household or other high personages. Private persons were at the same time cultivating land so rapidly that by the ninth century, in defiance of the law, huge domains were in the hands of powerful men, who claimed to be following the desires of the government, and thereby gained exemption from taxation. Owing to this illegal aggrandizement of land, the peasants, who were almost the only remaining tax-payers, in many cases provided themselves with arms against further loss, or deserted their lands and became outlaws. Many of the provincial governors of the provinces stayed in Kyōto, leaving the administration of their lands to their lieutenants. These last-named and the private holders of vast domains surrounded themselves with private warriors, many of whom had seen service on the frontier. From this stock sprang the samurai. "They were a privileged class, and must originally have been a rough breed who made fighting their vocation. This class was nat-

<sup>1</sup> Feudal Land Tenure in Japan (*American Hist. Review*, Vol. XX, 1914, p. 5).



urally recruited, in a long period of constant warfare, from the manliest and the most adventurous; and all the while the process of elimination went on, the timid and the feeble being sorted out, and only 'a rude race, all masculine, with brutish strength,' to borrow Emerson's phrase, surviving to form families and the ranks of the samurai."<sup>1</sup>

It was due to the developments outlined above that the samurai or "fighting knights" came into the important place which they held for seven centuries. The word *samurai* means "to be on guard," and before the twelfth century referred to those warriors who guarded the emperor's palace. However, as the conquest of the country developed under the Minamoto and Taira clans, the need for soldiery was so immediate in many instances, that instead of waiting for an army to be raised by the government, these same leaders would call upon the samurai, many of whom had left the luxurious Fujiwara court, had obtained power and position in their native districts, and were ever ready for daring adventures. By the latter half of the eleventh century, when the Minamoto and Taira chieftains each were eyeing the imperial palace, the military power was silently massed behind them, and the court was left with almost no support in the form of trained warriors. Surrounded by their faithful retainers, the Taira and Minamoto moved to Kyôto. A rival claim to the throne soon embroiled them in the struggle for supremacy, known as the wars of the Genji (Minamoto) and Heike (Taira) clans. Each side supported a rival claimant to the throne. In 1156 Kiyomori of the Taira clan won the day from the Minamoto Yoshitomo, possessed the imperial palace, filled the court offices with his relatives, married his daughter to the emperor, and in every detail supplanted the Fujiwara. The one stumbling block to Taira supremacy and safety was the military menace of the Minamoto clan. This was the cause of the longest and fiercest struggle in Japanese history.

The wars of the Genji and Heike clans were full of heroic encounters which have been the inspiration for many artists. The names of Yoshiie, Yoritomo, Yoshitsune, Tametomo, and Antoku shall ever represent the brave spirit of Japan. Each of these heroes is the subject of decoration on certain sword-fittings in this collection, and a more detailed picture of their lives and their times is given as the characters appear on certain specimens described in the text following.

Finally in the battle of Dan-no-ura in 1185 (see Plate XX, Fig. 2), the Minamoto followers overcame the Taira; and their rule which had lasted twenty-nine years came to an end. It was under Yoritomo, the

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<sup>1</sup> I. NITÔBE, *Bushidô*, pp. 7-8.

Minamoto chieftain, that the shōgunate was founded, and that Japan, though ever a monarchy from the undisputed superiority of the divinely born sovereign, became in reality a duarchy with a heavenly ruler, the emperor, dwelling in seclusion, and a military imperator who wielded all the powers of the administration. Yoritomo built the city of Kamakura. There, in the elegance of a second court, pretending to follow the emperor's wishes, he managed to place five of his family as military governors (*shugo*) over five extensive provinces. These positions had heretofore been held by civilians appointed from the court. He rewarded other Minamoto by making them military governors in other districts, each to be subject to the shōgun's immediate orders. Each of these officers received his pay from the product of the land under his supervision. Each had entire charge and land set aside for the support of his soldiers. Thus the administration of the country passed from the civil to the military, who held it thenceforward for seven centuries. The province rulers under Yoritomo were the forerunners of the powerful daimyō of the sixteenth century.

Yoritomo, in 1192, received the title of Sei-i Tai Shōgun ("Barbarian Subjugating Great General").<sup>1</sup> The title "shōgun," from this time forward, had a new meaning and stood for such authority that foreigners supposed him to be the real sovereign, as we learn from Commodore Perry's own account and those of the early travellers.

Unlike Yoritomo and his braver brother, Yoshitsune, the two sons who survived him at his death in 1199 were weak and dissolute. The system which Yoritomo had perfected with the greatest ambition for the Minamoto family, became the tool in the hands of the Hōjō regents. The father-in-law of Yoritomo was Hōjō Tokimasa, known as the first Shikken of Kamakura, "the Prime Minister" to the "Shadow Shōguns." He gained his position through the machinations of Masako, the wife of Yoritomo, who preferred to increase the strength of her father rather than the glory of her own son. Added to the anomaly of two capitals, was the power behind "the second throne," which these Hōjō regents wielded. Content with their authority, none of the Hōjō sought the title of shōgun; but dominating over and dictating for the puppet shōguns whom they installed and banished at their pleasure, these tyrants (for such they became) ruled for 140 years.

The repulse of the Mongolian invasion in 1281 was one of the few beneficent acts of these usurpers. Not only were shōguns disposed of with ease, but also emperors were deposed and sent into exile. The

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<sup>1</sup> W. E. GRIFFIS, *Mikado's Empire*, Vol. I, p. 142.



further feudalization of the country was accomplished by the seizure and division of the estates of all those who assisted the emperor, or in any undertaking opposed the policy of these *shikken*.

This usurpation of power and oppression of the people, and more especially the banishment of Go Daigo, the emperor, awakened the in-born loyalty of three heroic men, Nitta Yoshisada, Ashikaga Takauji, and Kusunoki Masashige. Nitta Yoshisada, though a captain in the Hōjō army, refused to fight the imperial forces, which he was ordered to do. He deserted his command, sent word to the exiled emperor, gathered his retainers about him, and within a few days the city of Kamakura was burned to the ground. Ashikaga Takauji and Kusunoki Masashige restored the imperial power in the west. The Hōjō leaders and their vassals were overcome, the report being that 6,800 were either slain or committed harakiri.

In 1335 the exiled emperor Go Daigo came back, but peace did not return with him to the country, for a new cause for war appeared. Ashikaga Takauji had through treachery lost the imperial favour. In consequence he sought out Kōgen, one of the emperors deposed by the Hōjō, and setting him up as sovereign and establishing a rival shōgunate, Go Daigo was again forced to flee. Each branch of the imperial household was supported by powerful daimyō. This civil war, through years of bloody fighting, changed from a contest in which the imperial succession was the factor, to a struggle between numerous feudal lords fighting for more land and more influence. For fifty-six years Japan continued to have two emperors until from alarm at the disintegration of the country, Ashikaga Yoshimitsu acknowledged Go-Komatsu as legitimate ruler in 1392.

Military domination, however, had completely disorganized the nobility who sought protection from the powerful daimyō, for whom military magistracies had become hereditary. Even the shōgunate lost its old significance in the unceasing contests of the clan chiefs for more land,—contests in which they amassed such wealth and power that each became a law unto himself, supported by his own armed retainers. Under the thirteen Ashikaga shōguns from 1336-1573, Japan lived through her darkest days. Crime, neglect of agriculture and industry, seizure of land, and ceaseless war made the name of Ashikaga hated by all the generations. The emperor and the nobles were stripped of any influence or wealth, the shōgun himself had no authority. The whole country had become divided as spoil among the daimyō who were surrounded by their samurai, loyal to the last degree in their devotion and allegiance to their military chief, subjects of the emperor only in theory.

At this crucial moment in the history of the country, there arose one, who, deposing Ashikaga Yoshiaki, determined to centralize the authority of government and bring the land back to a unified state. This was Oda Nobunaga, the master of six provinces in central Japan. Realizing the menace of the Buddhist priesthood in their strength of arms and property, he ordered a persecution of the bonzes, which in its extent and ruthlessness made him the hated enemy of all Buddhists forever. For purposes of further annihilating them, he became a strong supporter of the Jesuits, who had been pouring into the country since 1542. His final aim was to bring back the emperor to supreme power. Not being of Minamoto descent, he never assumed the title of shōgun; but, supported by his two generals, Hideyoshi and Iyeyasu, and a most powerful army, he pacified the warring clans, and to a great extent restored order to the country. When in the full vigor of manhood, at the age of 49, he was assassinated by a traitor while dwelling in the temple of Honnōji in Kyōto. The act was avenged by Hideyoshi, Nobunaga's loyal general, who immediately assumed complete power. He was made "kwambaku," and as the officer nearest the emperor ruled the country for sixteen years. The daimyō had been by no means completely pacified by Nobunaga. Hideyoshi was skillful enough to occupy their minds and those of their followers in an expedition which, while it was inglorious, tended toward the unification of the clans. This was the conquest of Korea, begun in the year 1592 and lasting for five years. From the point of view of this study, this conquest was the most important event under Hideyoshi's rule.

Before the death of Hideyoshi in 1598, Iyeyasu, the other general of Nobunaga, had been recognized as the rising man of the future, and Hideyoshi had engineered the marriage of his son, Hideyori, to the grand-daughter of the coming ruler. Tokugawa Iyeyasu had no intention of backing the claim of Hideyoshi's son. On the other hand, he was determined to become the ruler himself, and was soon challenged in his ambitious plans. At the battle of Sekigahara he met the army of his adversaries. His was a united force of 80,000 loyal warriors, while that of his enemies, though numbering 130,000, was composed of the troops returned from Korea and the retainers of a league of powerful daimyō each of whom had an individual cause to fight.<sup>1</sup> After a most terrific battle, with the loss of thousands of men, the victory was to Iyeyasu.

This man is thought by many to be the most remarkable character that Japan ever produced. He was not only a great general, but also

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<sup>1</sup> W. GRIFFIS, *Japanese Nation in Evolution*, p. 253.



a far-seeing statesman, calm in his methods, firm in his purpose. His it was to garner the fruits of victory which had been won by his predecessors, Nobunaga and Hideyoshi. There had been no shōgun for thirty-two years, since neither of the former dictators was eligible for that position. Nobunaga, though an aristocrat, was of Taira blood; Hideyoshi had risen from the ranks of the common people by sheer brilliancy in military tactics. Tokugawa Iyeyasu, being a descendant of the Minamoto family, soon, on account of his evident power, was created "Sei i Tai Shōgun" by the emperor. By him was completed the elaborate feudal system of which he was the head.

As was observed above, through the centuries of almost ceaseless warfare, Japan had developed many mighty military chiefs of provinces. The land had become the spoil which they had divided among themselves and their loyal adherents. The emperor had so long been hidden from public vision, the administration of the government had so completely passed into the hands of shōguns and other usurpers that the old loyalty of subject to emperor had been transferred and transformed into undivided allegiance to an immediate military lord. Iyeyasu determined to co-ordinate and centralize the military power under one head. He married three of his daughters to powerful daimyō; he invested three of his sons with very rich fiefs. The daimyō, such as those of Satsuma and Higo and other unconquerable districts, he conciliated; and those strong leaders whom he had conquered at Sekigahara he tactfully "treated as equals, less fortunate in the game of war than himself."<sup>1</sup>

After the re-organization of the daimiates and the redistribution of fiefs, many of which went to his own kinsmen, Iyeyasu had so fixed the balance of power that the successful revolt of any daimyō, no matter how strong, was next to impossible. In order to hold a further check upon them, he required these lords to pass a certain allotted time in Yedo, which city he chose for his capital in 1590. The processions of daimyō with their samurai on their way to Yedo have been described by many a writer<sup>2</sup> and delineated by many an artist. They were the complete embodiment of the elaborate feudal system which had been developed through ages of fighting. A feudal chief might have as many as one thousand retainers, all equipped with weapons and armor which would reflect the richness of their lord's domain. As they journeyed through the country, all commoners were forced to kneel with bowed head along the roadside. Should any one fail to do so, instant death was dealt by those

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<sup>1</sup> W. GRIFFIS, *Mikado's Empire*, Vol. I, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> E. KAEMPFER, *History of Japan* (J. MacLehose ed. Glasgow 1906), Vol. II, p. 330.

officers who preceded the train in order to compel due respect. Looking down upon the procession was as serious an offence as not prostrating one's self. All shutters were closed, as the equipage moved along.

Added to this severance of the peasant class from the military was the fact that the samurai dwelt within the park surrounding the palace of the daimyō which was called a *yashiki*, while the peasantry who farmed the land dwelt without. The richness and beauties of the palaces of the daimyō have been most interestingly described by T. R. H. McCLATCHIE in his article on the "Feudal Mansions of Yedo."<sup>1</sup>

The term samurai included the daimyō, their retainers, the hatamoto or flag bearers, and the private soldiers of the shōgun. All received hereditary incomes of rice from the government, all were exempt from taxes, none engaged in business of any sort, and all were privileged to wear two swords. Through centuries of testing, there had been developed a sense of honor and chivalry, a strength of endurance, and an almost complete self-abnegation for the sake of the feudal lord whom they served, which helped to make the samurai a unique product of mankind. The sword had become the symbol of power and prowess. Under the influence of the teachings of the Buddhistic Zen sect, supreme repose was reflected in all art and in the mode of living of those who became its disciples. "Not to use the sword, but to be the sword, pure, serene, immovable, was the ideal of the Ashikaga knight."<sup>2</sup>

Of such material was the bulk of the military class composed, when Iyeyasu became supreme dictator and master. Though ever a vassal of the emperor, Iyeyasu had assumed even the protectorship of his sovereign and his court. He rewrote the codes for both the *kuge* ("nobles") and the *buke* ("military men"), and outlined the principles of law which were enforced by the Tokugawa shōgun for the following two hundred years. The unsuccessful revolt of Hideyori, son of Hideyoshi, in 1615, and the massacre of the Christians at Shimabara by the order of Iyemitsu in 1637 were the only events which disturbed two hundred and fifty years of peace.<sup>3</sup>

Emerging from the dark years of war into the transforming time of quiet harmony, the mode of life of military Japan became radically softened and enriched. Etiquette was cultivated to the extreme. Customs, such as flower arrangement, tea ceremonies, and poetical contests were rigidly outlined. Literature and the arts were fostered, and

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<sup>1</sup> *Transactions As. Soc. Japan*, Vol. XV, pt. 2, pp. 157-182.

<sup>2</sup> OKAKURA KAKUZO, *Ideals of the East*, p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> The importance of this last event must not be minimized, but cannot be fully treated in this study. See W. GRIFFIS, *Mikado's Empire*, pp. 247-264.



daimyō who had lost much of their political power filled their days with the peaceful pleasures of painting and poetry. Costumes were of the richest brocade. Elegance was reflected in the armor and swords which during this period of peace were no longer the garments and weapons of defence, but the rich attire and ornaments for the purpose of parade and adornment. Added to the peace of this epoch was the exclusive policy of the Tokugawa shōgun which helped to make for the cultivation and refinement of the national civilization. Japan was an isolated nation from 1624 until 1868. Not only was foreign trade forbidden, save at the port of Nagasaki, where the Dutch were allowed a most limited intercourse, but also foreign travel was absolutely prohibited. National industry flourished to a remarkable degree. Luxurious living was the general condition of the higher rank. Artists and artisans were constantly occupied in producing objects for the enriching of daily life.

Along with the embellishments of the luxurious Tokugawa era came the interest which proved to be the central cause for the undoing of this family's power. Iyeyasu had been a great patron of literature, and under his encouragement in the study of ancient works, there had developed a spirit of research which awakened in certain minds deep questionings. Strangely enough, one of the most erudite among these scholars was Iyeyasu's own grandson, the Prince of Mito, who compiled the *Dai Nihon Shi* ("History of Japan"), written in 1715. Through the influence of this and other like researches, the prestige of the imperial dynasty was lifted up, and the usurpation of the Tokugawa shōgun was seen in the broad daylight of truth. The old emperor-worship was re-instated in this Shintō revival. The samurai, who were among the most highly educated men in the empire, began to see that the first allegiance was of the vassal to his emperor. To many became plain the evidence that only in the succession of the "Heavenly Sovereigns" lay the safety of the country,—the divine inheritance which had for so many centuries been hidden and usurped by the shōguns.

Such an opportunity for throwing off Tokugawa domination was not neglected by the several restive lords, those of Satsuma and Chōshū most especially. They became advocates of the revival of learning, and in every way sought to undermine the influence of their hated oppressor. On the height of this disturbing wave came into view the fleet of Commodore Perry on July 8th, 1853.

The story of modern Japan is too well known to be detailed here, save as it reflects the final disintegration of the feudal system and the recognition of the individual citizen as superior to the clan as the unit of society.

A year after his first appearance, Commodore Perry returned to Yedo Bay, and there a treaty between the United States and Japan was signed. Whether the Commodore ever knew that he had not treated with the emperor is a question raised by W. GRIFFIS.<sup>1</sup> At any rate, the treaty bears the signature of the Tycoon (Tai Kun, "Great Lord"), a title taken by Tokugawa Iyesada, in order to appear as supreme ruler of the empire. This assumption of power stirred the court and the entire kingdom with indignation. The shōgun was between two fires, the deep-seated distrust of him at home, and the aggression of the foreigners which he had ignored, and which he now knew was beyond resistance.

No treaty with foreigners was valid without the signature of the emperor, and this treaty the emperor had absolutely refused to sign. The clash between Kyōto and Yedo was on. Mistrust of the foreigners, coupled with a deep hatred for the shōgun, and a revived loyalty for the emperor encouraged the leaders of the clans of Satsuma, Chōshū, Mito, and other dissatisfied feudal lords to arm in preparation for war against the Tokugawa usurper whom they would reduce to his proper place as vassal to the one supreme ruler. All over the country the rising spirit of patriotism was surging to express itself. In 1863 the Prince of Chōshū precipitated matters by firing upon the foreign vessels at Shimonoseki. The shōgun, in attempting to reduce this clan to order, realized the crumbling state of his power. After his defeat by the Chōshū clansmen in 1866, Iyemochi died, to be succeeded by Keiki who was the last shōgun that Japan suffered. He was a weak and vacillating creature who held his office for only a year, resigning in 1867. In the meantime, in 1865, Kōmei, the emperor, had been persuaded by his advisers that he must ratify the foreign treaties, after the foreign powers had united in a demand that the documents bear the signature of the emperor. No longer could the shōgun stand as the sole sponsor of intercourse with the other nations of the world. Kōmei died in 1867, and was succeeded by his son, Mutsuhito, a boy of sixteen years of age. In 1868, the combined troops of Satsuma, Tosa, Echizen, Owari, and Aki possessed the imperial palace and determined to restore the emperor to his ancient place. Though instated in the old capital of Kyōto, Mutsuhito transferred his palace the next year to Yedo, which from this time on was known as Tōkyō ("Eastern Capital").

The shōgun made one last attempt in 1868 to regain his former prestige. Setting out from Ōsaka whither he had retired, with his retainers and those of the daimyō of Aizu and Kuwana, Keiki attempted to re-enter Kyōto and deliver the young emperor from the hands of his

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<sup>1</sup> Mikado's Empire, Vol. I, p. 304.

"bad counselors." At the battle of Fushimi the shōgun was beaten and fled to Yedo, where he retired into private life. By 1870 the war was over and the leaders of thought, especially Ōkubo of Satsuma and Gotō and Kido, all of them students of foreign languages and ideas, became advocates for the Europeanization of the country.

The four great clans of Satsuma, Chōshū, Tosa, and Hizen were the first to realize that the fiefs held by feudal lords should belong to the emperor, the supreme head of the empire. Steps toward the fall of feudalism sounded louder each day. By 1871 an edict was issued for all daimyō to retire to private life. Their lands and their revenue reverted to the imperial treasury. The same year the samurai gave up their hereditary pensions. In 1876 the privilege of wearing two swords was taken away from the samurai. Society was re-organized into three classes—the nobles, the gentry, and the commons. Kuge and daimyō were terms never to be used again with the same significance. The army of the present time is an army of conscription. The people of the nation have come into view, and the feudal lord is now what the peasant is,—a private citizen, a true subject of the emperor, who, after centuries of exalted seclusion, has come out to be the visible ruler of his people.



## I. EARLY TYPES OF SWORDS—KEN AND TACHI THE COURT SWORD

The earliest types of Japanese sword of which we have any knowledge are those which have been found in the dolmens or tombs of the ancient Japanese, the Yamato people. According to tradition, these monuments date from the second century B.C. to the eighth century A.D., when the influence of Buddhism counteracted this ancient form of burial. In A.D. 645, the time of the great political reform, Kōtoku, the reigning emperor, issued this order concerning burials in dolmens: "Deposit not in them gold or silver or copper or iron, and let earthenware objects alone represent the clay chariots and straw figures of antiquity. . . . Bestow not jewel shirts or jade armor. All these things are practices of the unenlightened."<sup>1</sup>

Great numbers of these dolmens (*misasagi*) exist in Japan, generally located on margins of the more important plains and river basins and near the coasts of the Inland and Japan Seas. None are found in the extreme northeast and parts of the wild forest and mountain tracts, which were evidently held by the aborigines who had been driven back by these more civilized conquerors.

The dolmens are of diverse forms, many of them containing stone or terra-cotta coffins; and almost all have yielded objects of great antiquarian interest, such as pottery, mirrors, clay figures, horse trappings, beads, armor, and swords.<sup>2</sup> The sword blades found therein are of iron or steel forged, not cast, and are of various types. They are generally straight, single or double edged; some, however, evince a slight inward curve, which H. JOLY thinks accidental.<sup>3</sup> The two-edged swords are known as *tsurugi* or *ken*, and are probably of earlier date than the single-edged sword. Several of these dugout specimens are of stone, having been made for burial purposes to replace the actual sword. The two-edged type of sword has persisted through the centuries as the typical weapon of the Buddhist ritual, having the lotus-formed hilt terminating in a *vajra* ("thunderbolt"). It is to be seen on many of the stone statues of Buddhist divinities, especially the delineations of Fudō and in

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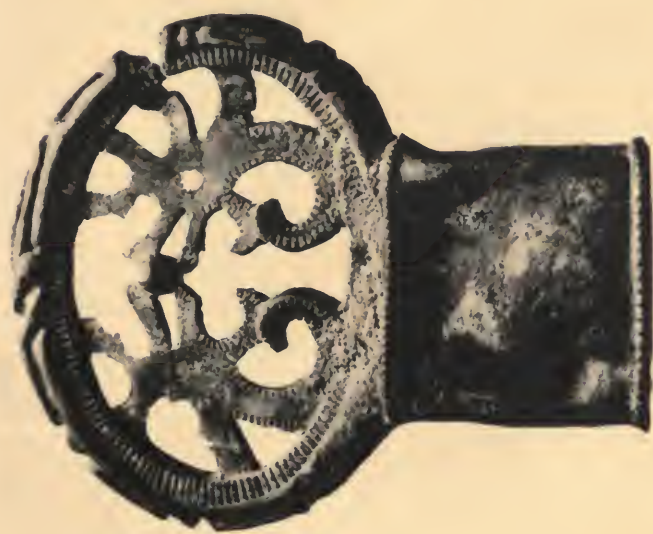
<sup>1</sup>W. ASTON, *Nihongi*, Vol. II, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>W. GOWLAND, *The Dolmens of Japan and Their Builders* (*Archaeologia*, Vol. LV, pp. 439-524) and *Metals and Metal Working in Old Japan* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII).

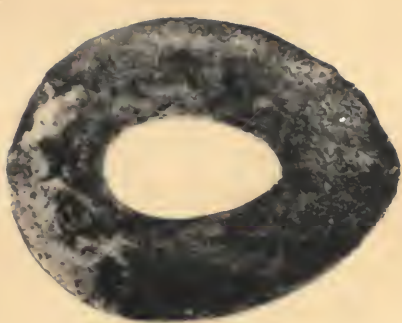
<sup>3</sup>H. JOLY, *Sword and Same*, pp. 9, 11.



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POMMELS AND TSUBA FOUND IN DOLMENS, BROOKLYN INSTITUTE MUSEUM (pp. 25-27).

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY







POMMEL AND TSUBA FOUND IN DOLMENS, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART (p. 27).



the hands of Suzano-wo (Plate XXXIV, Fig. 3), who is said to have originally wrested it from the dragon's tail.<sup>1</sup> It is this type of sword also which very often appears engraved on blades, sometimes combined with a dragon, or associated with modified Devanāgarī characters, called Bonji, and quite as often as the sole decoration.

The single-edged weapon found in the dolmens is generally termed *tachi*, though, as Arai Hakuseki points out, in ancient days *tsurugi* and *tachi* were terms used interchangeably.<sup>2</sup> It is of about twice the length of the two-edged sword. Though the fittings of the scabbards, in many cases, have become disintegrated from burial in the ground, it is quite evident that these were slung swords, the scabbards bearing two feet (*ashi*) through which passed cords or chains, whereby they were suspended from the belt.<sup>3</sup> On many of the clay figures known as *haniwa* and found in the same dolmens, there may be clearly distinguished a hanging sword, which, though curved and short in comparison to these remains mentioned above, more than likely represents the type of sword found entombed with the clay figures.<sup>4</sup>

It is the fittings of these early weapons which are of particular interest in this study, as the forerunners of the mountings which appear upon the swords of Japan throughout the ensuing centuries. The pommel and the guard or *tsuba* (that disk which fits between the hilt and blade) will claim our attention rather than the blade itself, the study of which may be set aside here, as it has been exhaustively dealt with in books both Japanese and English.<sup>5</sup>

Among the excavated specimens referred to, there are many types of pommels, several of which may be studied from the examples illustrated on Plates I and II. The two excellent examples in Plate I are from the Brooklyn Museum. The examples on Plate II are the property of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. All of the dug-out specimens are of copper gilded or of iron with a thin sheet of copper coated with gold. The type in Plate I, Fig. 1, seems to have been made as an

<sup>1</sup> B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Kojiki*, p. 63. "He drew the Totsuka-no-Tsurugi and cut the serpent in pieces, and the River Hi became like a river of blood. And when he cut the middle tail, the edge of the sword broke, thereupon he split the flesh open, and therein he found a great sharp sword, which he took. It is the Kusanagi-no-tsurugi."

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, *The Sword and Same*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Straps of printed leather, known as *shobu kawa* (from the design of iris *shobu* and water lilies *kawa* printed upon them), were used later for the suspension of slung *tachi*.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Kokka*, No. 46, there are represented, along with drawings of early swords, two such figures carrying slung swords.

<sup>5</sup> Particularly H. JOLY, *The Sword and Same*; and GILBERTSON, *Japanese Sword Blades* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. IV, pp. 186-215).

independent accessory which fitted into a hilt metal covered, as may be seen in examples in the Tōkyō Imperial Museum and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York, where scabbards of similar swords are in a good state of preservation. The pommel was made secure by means of a peg which passed through the hole in the centre. In all probability, this form is of a later date than that of the ring-pommel sword which is of one piece, the hilt being contiguous with the blade, and which is immediately reminiscent of the knife coins of the Chou period in China from which country these weapons must have come.<sup>1</sup>

The first copper coin was cast in Japan, according to records, in the period 'Wadō (A.D. 708-714), which received its name from the discovery of copper in that country, *Wa* meaning Yamato, *Dō* being the character for copper. It is therefore likely that if these swords with copper pommels were not imported from China or Korea, they were probably made of metal which was brought in from the outside world.<sup>2</sup>

The specimen under discussion is carved in the round to represent a dragon, the body forming the ring, the head filling the centre portion. Details on the head are brought out by fine surface-carving. Other pommels closely resembling this one have as a decoration the head of a phoenix (sometimes designated a sparrow) or a human head.<sup>3</sup> The bird-head has been traced to Kudara (Korea), which had borrowed it from China. On certain portraits of Michizane, Kamatari, and Iyeyasu, there are to be seen long swords with pommels in the form of a bird's head without the ring. These were a later outcome of the ring pommel, and are said to have been worn in hawking expeditions by court nobles in olden times.<sup>4</sup>

The other pommel in Plate I, Fig. 2, also bears strong traces of Chinese or Korean workmanship. Within the circular opening there are chiselled in positive silhouette two forms conceded to be dragons facing one another and holding a gem. This Chinese motive appears repeatedly throughout Japanese art, and is the characteristic decoration of a group of tsuba known as Namban, which became popular in the seventeenth century, and which are dealt with together with the meaning of this design on page 74. This early pommel is joined to a broad collar by which the whole was fastened to the sword. The collar has upon it at the top and bottom a narrow, beaded band.

<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY, *Sword and Same*, p. 18. In the same work (on the plate opposite p. 6) there are two ring-pommel swords found in a dolmen in Higo.

<sup>2</sup> W. GOWLAND, *Metals and Metal Working in Old Japan* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII, p. 29).

<sup>3</sup> N. MUNRO, *Prehistoric Japan*, p. 413.

<sup>4</sup> H. JOLY, *Sword and Same*, p. 18.



Upon these swords, in many cases, have been found bronze guards or tsuba of varying thickness, but always undecorated (Fig. 3). Though oval in form, they resemble in part a bronze guard which is reproduced along with one of jade carved with a hydra design, in B. LAUFER's "Jade" (Plate XXV), and which are accessories to Chinese swords of the Han period (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). This jade guard is of interest, not only for its intrinsic worth, but also because it may represent a portion of the jade armor referred to in the quotation from the Nihongi (p. 24). The fact that certain of the swords found in these tombs show strong marks of Chinese workmanship would bear out the statement that such jade guards might also have been the possessions of certain warriors who had their precious weapons buried with them.

There is found alongside with the swords aforementioned a type of pommel quite distinct in conception, the origin of which is a matter of much discussion, some writers assigning it to Scythian and Persian art.<sup>1</sup> It is believed by other authorities, particularly BASHFORD DEAN,<sup>2</sup> to be indigenous to Japan, being conceived as a development from the ancient Ainu sword. It may be studied from a diagram in the Bulletin cited, where its development has been traced in a convincing manner. The same sword is reproduced on Plate II in this publication.

The pommel is copper gilded, of hollow bulbous form, being stuffed with pieces of fibre or bits of textiles. It is set at an angle to the hilt, and is perforated through the centre with an eye, probably used for the passage of a cord by which the sword is suspended. Swords bearing this type of pommel are called *kabu-tsuchi* ("turnip-mallet"), and some writers believe them to be the swords referred to both in the Kojiki and Nihongi as "mallet-headed." The gilded copper which covers the scabbards of such swords is decorated not only with the straight lines of large dots, characteristic of the scabbards and hilts on all of the swords from the dolmens, but there is often found a more beautiful decoration in the form of a delicate scroll-like tracery, brought out by the use of very small dots, in some cases punched or pricked.

The greatest interest, however, in connection with this mallet-headed sword, is awakened in the study of the tsuba which generally accompanies it. This guard is sometimes plain, but more often it presents the first trace of any decoration that has been put upon this important accessory (Plate II, Fig. 2). Always of copper gilded, it is often provided with trapezoidal apertures, six, seven, or eight in number, which, while

<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY, *The Sword and Same*, p. 139; and MUNRO, *Prehistoric Japan*, p. 413.

<sup>2</sup> *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of New York*, Vol. XV, p. 231.

lightening the tsuba, are so placed as not to take away from its efficacy as a guard for the hand. In shape it is oval and pointed at the base, resembling, as Joly suggests, the form of the jewel (*tama*), by which name it is sometimes called.

From the time of the introduction of Buddhism from China through Korea in A.D. 552, according to tradition, Japan was in constant communication with China through the visits of traders, monks, and teachers. Her court was modeled after that of the T'ang rulers, and every branch of art reflects the elegance of the empire, the decoration of the sword serving as an excellent illustration whereby this influence may be traced.

Among the treasures in the Shōsōin at Nara, the building which serves as the depository of the art collections belonging to the imperial family, there are objects dating from A.D. 756, the year in which Kōmyō-Kōgō, consort to the emperor, gave to the nation the personal belongings left by her husband. Many of the swords and other weapons are Chinese, and are important for the purpose of this study, since they served as the models from which were adopted the Japanese swords with their ornate fittings, used in court ceremonies for several centuries.

Among the early specimens of the court *tachi* are two, each of which bears upon the hilt a ring of bells. In the earliest example, a slender span of metal adorned with small bells is affixed to either side of the hilt, one end of which is secured to the tsuba, the other end welded to the cap of the hilt (*kashira*).<sup>1</sup> The tsuba on this particular sword in the Shōsōin is small, narrow, and of the shape generally known as *shitogi*,—a name which we are informed was given to this type from its resemblance in form to the rice-cake (*shitogi*) used in the Shintō ritual.<sup>2</sup> It is hollow and of gilded bronze decorated with a finely chased floral pattern. All of the fittings on this and other early *tachi* are of exquisite workmanship and distinctly different in form from the fittings used on the fighting swords. The mountings of the *tachi* are as follows: *ashi*; *tsuba*; the cap on the hilt of the form known as *kabuto-gane* ("helmet metal"); the ring on the hilt for the passage of a cord, known as *musubi-gane* ("knob metal"); the ornaments for the hilt corresponding to the *menuki*, called *tsuka-ai* ("hilt companions"); and the foot of the scabbard known as the *ishi-zuki*.<sup>3</sup> These early fittings are generally adorned with floral designs. It is of interest to note that by this time the pommel had taken the form which it preserved practically throughout the follow-

<sup>1</sup> For illustrations of this type, see H. JOLY, *The Sword and Same*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY (*The Sword and Same*, P. 45) traces this form to the Chinese guard discussed on p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 211.



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1, SHITOGI TSUBA (p. 39). 2-3, TYPES OF EARLY DECORATION (p. 38).

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ing centuries, when it appears wound with braid or covered with the skin of the ray (Japanese *same*, *Rhinobatus armatus*).

While one of these bell-adorned swords in the Shōsōin has the small *shitogi* tsuba of very narrow width and thus of no value as a protection for the hand, the other has a later form of tsuba, also called *shitogi*. This type may be ascribed to the Fujiwara period (900-1199). This guard is similar to the simple form above with the addition of a projecting ring on either side, and is the type which was worn at court ceremonies in Kyōto up until 1868 (Plate III, Fig. 1). The specimen pictured here, though of nineteenth-century workmanship, is a faithful reproduction of this form. The decoration, however, is not that found on these early *shitogi* tsuba, which, as was said above, was usually a floral scroll design. In this case the decoration is made up of two crests—*matsukawa bishi* ("pine river diamond") and the *tachibana*, a species of small orange (*Citrus tachibana*).<sup>1</sup>

While the *shitogi* tsuba were suitable for use at court, where all was peace and luxury, they would have offered little protection for the warriors, who at that time were constantly engaged in fierce struggles in the north and east. Undoubtedly the fighting sword must have been equipped with a more efficacious guard for the hand. Though much of the fighting was done with bow and arrow, halberd and spear, the sword in hand-to-hand fighting was used constantly. This fighting weapon was either of *tachi* form, a slung sword, or of the shape known as *katana*, a sword which was thrust through the belt, and whose scabbard was secured to the belt by a cord (*sageo*) passing through a cleat on the side of the scabbard, known as the *kurikata*. This same cord (*sageo*) was used to tie back the sleeves in time of combat.<sup>2</sup>

In many of the early scrolls (*makimono*), particularly the one in the Boston Fine Arts Museum, known as the Keion *makimono*, the thir-

<sup>1</sup> The ground is covered with small raised dots, produced with the blows of a hollow punch and resembling fish-roe, from which it is said to have received its name (*nanako*). Though this ground decoration was brought to perfection by the artists of the Gotō school in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, *nanako*, according to H. JOLY (Sword and Same, p. 23) is met with on some of the early swords at Ise, in a primitive form. There is also an example of this ground on a specimen reputed to be of eighth-century workmanship, in the Shōsōin at Nara (see Toyei Shuko, Vol. I, p. 24). It is an octagonal mirror covered with a "thin silver plate done in fish-roe (*nanako*) ground decorated with landscapes, human figures, flowers and birds." This process, as employed by the masterful artists of the Gotō school, is treated more fully below (p. 60).

<sup>2</sup> Though the word *katana*, which is also read *to*, appears in the Kojiki (A.D. 711), the style of the ancient *katana* is not known to any certainty. H. JOLY (The Sword and Same, p. 41) has pointed out the fact that, while the *tachi* blade bears the signature on the tang on the *ura* (outside when worn slung face downward), the *katana* signature is inscribed on the tang on the *omote* (outside when the edge is worn upward in the belt).

teenth-century artist has pictured warriors equipped with slung swords (*tachi*) which have tsuba of large size with strengthened rims. Tradition tells us that these early fighting swords had guards of several layers of leather which were called *neri tsuba*. They were probably stiffened by lacquering or strengthened with a layer of iron in the centre. On certain sixteenth-century swords, which are *katana*, the guard is of many layers of leather bound together on the edge with a copper rim.<sup>1</sup> Other tsuba of this early period had thin iron plates on either side, called *dai seppa*. In certain cases the plates were punched or chased with designs. A similar decoration may be seen on tsuba fitted to ceremonial *tachi*, of a shape called *aoi*, so named from four perforations on the edge of the oval guard, which in form resemble the *aoi* ("mallow leaf"). The decoration on these early guards was along the edge and on the *seppa dai* or space surrounding the opening for the blade. The *aoi* form continued throughout the centuries as one of the favorite shapes for tsuba, and is well illustrated by the specimen (Plate X, Fig. 4), which is of seventeenth-century workmanship.

As a fighting weapon, the *tachi* was superseded by the *katana* during the Ashikaga period. It held its own place, however, as the ceremonial weapon carried by nobles at all court functions in Kyōto for seven centuries, and was adorned with fittings similar in form to those described above on the early *tachi*, the *shitogi* and *aoi* tsuba being the only accepted forms for this formal weapon.

Before departing from the subject of the ceremonial court-sword mention should be made of references, occurring in the works of many writers on Japanese swords, to the two types of *tachi* used in the Ashikaga period by the nobles of the fifth rank and above, and known as *shiratachi* ("white tachi," meaning "silver mounted"); and *kurozukuri* ("black sword"), referring to *tachi* fitted in black-lacquer mountings, worn by nobles of sixth rank and below. Sometimes the *kurozukuri* was carried by an attendant behind the noble wearing the *shiratachi*.<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY adds a note of interest, describing *tachi* of great length without *ashi*, which were strapped to the back by a cord passing through the *kurikata*. These, he tells us, were one-handed swords, long and curved, which were usually carried bare in actual fighting, the scabbard being discarded. They were brandished by the warrior, as he rode horseback. This *tachi* without *ashi* is an important link between the slung sword and the fighting *katana* so admirably balanced for effective wielding.

<sup>1</sup> E. GILBERTSON, *The Decoration of Swords and Sword Furniture (Transactions Japan Soc., Vol. III, p. 84)*.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, *The Sword and Same*, pp. 21, 22, 23.

## II. THE DAI-SHŌ: THE KATANA AND WAKIZASHI SMALL SWORDS AND DAGGERS NOMENCLATURE OF THE FITTINGS AND ALLOYS USED FOR MOUNTS

The *katana*, which was worn thrust through the belt and thus at hand for a surprise attack, naturally replaced, as a fighting weapon, the *tachi*, which was either slung at the side or carried by an attendant who followed the warrior. H. JOLY<sup>1</sup> tells us that at first the *katana* had no tsuba, and was used only by the lower classes. When adopted by the samurai for the fighting sword in the Ashikaga period, it was equipped with a tsuba and paired with a smaller sword, called the *wakizashi*. These two known as the *dai-shō* ("long and short") were the pride of the samurai, who alone was privileged to wear two swords. The *katana*, the longer of the pair, remained the accepted fighting sword throughout the centuries of the feudal régime, and was the weapon for personal revenge and the defence of the feudal lord. It varied in length according to prescribed rules in different centuries until in 1670 the length was settled upon as 2 shaku, 8 sun, 8 fu (88.2 cm).<sup>2</sup>

The shorter sword (*wakizashi*) was very often uniform in decoration with the *katana* and was always carried in the belt, whereas it was customary when entering a private house for a samurai to lay his *katana* on the *katanakake* ("sword rack") near the entrance as a matter of trust and courtesy to his host. The *wakizashi* was retained in the belt. This smaller sword was generally more elaborately decorated than the *katana* and was the weapon dearest to the heart of the samurai; with it he might follow his lord in death, redeem himself from the disgrace of being killed by an enemy or commit suicide in order to uphold and proclaim certain principles or raise a protest against unjust political measures. The suicide which was performed with this sword was called *harakiri* or *seppuku* (literally, "belly-cutting"). This form of self-destruction probably originated in the middle ages when, rather than be taken prisoner by an enemy, the samurai preferred to take his own life by inflicting the fatal cross-cut. To follow one's lord in death, to perform *harakiri* as a protest against a moral failure, either of his own or his master, were two principles evolved out of the religion of loyalty

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<sup>1</sup> The Sword and Same, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, Japanese Sword Fittings in the Nauntun Coll., p. xvii.



(*bushidō*). Though forbidden by Tokugawa Iyeyasu, harakiri persisted, and is known to have been practised by subjects of the late Emperor Mutsuhito at the time of his death in 1912. The preceding ceremony, as well as the performance itself with the final severing of the victim's head by a faithful friend, is vividly described by A. B. MITFORD in the appendix to his "Tales of Old Japan." This account and the story of the Forty-Seven Ronins should be read by all who would understand the complete absence of fear in the face of death and the spirit of loyalty and self-abnegation of the samurai for the sake of his feudal lord.<sup>1</sup>

A third sword sometimes carried by a samurai with the *dai-shō* was the *tanto*, a small dagger-like weapon fully mounted and generally about 3.5 cm long. This was worn in the house, and in some cases was preferred to the *wakizashi* for the performance of harakiri, for which ceremony it was fitted with a hilt and scabbard of plain white wood. When mounted without a tsuba, and used by elderly people or those who had retired from active life, the *tanto* was called *aikuchi*. The *metezashi* or *kwai ken* is another of the smaller daggers. When worn by men, its customary use was the cutting of the ligaments of armor. When worn by a woman, it was her ever-present protector against disgrace or the means by which she could release or follow her lord in death; for with it she cut the arteries in her neck, committing the suicide known as *jigai*, with the same staunch bravery with which the samurai performed "the happy dispatch," harakiri.

"Male children born in samurai families wore swords from their earliest day, the first was the *mamori katana* or charm sword, the hilt and scabbard of which were covered with brocade, to which was attached a *kinchaku* ("purse"). Later, at five years of age, the boy was ceremoniously stood upon a *go ban* ("go-board") to be dressed in his first *hakama* ("trousers"), and another sword was given him. The fittings of the swords of reduced dimensions which accompanied the first *kamishimo* or ceremonial dress of the child in this gembuku ceremony were, of course, small; and they are sometimes called, from the association with that dress, *kamishimozashi*, the same name being also sometimes applied to the short sword worn by the fully grown man."<sup>2</sup>

It is evident in what importance the blade must have been held throughout many centuries in Japan, for upon its purity and efficacy hung the life of the samurai: it was indeed "his living soul." The tests

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<sup>1</sup> A. MITFORD's account of a harakiri ceremony which he witnessed is reproduced in full by I. NITOE (Bushidō, pp. 117-120).

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, Japanese Sword Fittings of Naunton Collection, p. 21.



to which blades were put form some of the most interesting and surprising stories, for they were tried out, not only on the poor unfortunate wayfarers, but made to cleave cleanly through many layers of copper.<sup>1</sup>

"The occupation of the swordsmith was in old days the most sacred of crafts: he worked in priestly garb, and practised Shintō rites of purification, while engaged in the making of a good blade. Before his smithy was then suspended the sacred rope of rice-straw (*shimenawa*), which is the oldest symbol of Shintō: none even of his family might enter there, or speak to him; and he ate only of food cooked with holy fire."<sup>2</sup> With such reverence for the sword, there naturally developed alongside a desire to beautify the hilt and the scabbard.

From the early sixteenth century on, the sword had lavished upon it the art of many generations of craftsmen, who literally painted in metal exquisite designs upon the various fittings. The mountings of the *dai-shō* have a different nomenclature from those of the *tachi* (above, p. 28). Of these the *tsuba* or sword-guard, because of the extent of its surface, received the attention of many of the best artists. As previously explained, it is that plaque of metal which fits between the *tsuka* ("hilt") and the blade, thus affording a guard for the hand. Its changing form will be traced throughout the following chapters.<sup>3</sup> It was securely fastened to the tang (*nakago*) by a collar of metal called the *fuchi* beneath which were one or two washers (*seppa*) which when decorated and large, as was the case on early *tsuba*, were called *dai seppa*. The *fuchi* almost always supplements in decoration the *kashira* ("pommel"), the cap which terminates the hilt. On either side there is an opening through which passes the *itomaki* ("wrapping of the hilt"), thus securing this fitting tightly. Immediately below the *kashira* on the hilt are two ornaments known as *menuki*. They cover the *mekugi* (rivets fastening the *nakago* or tang), and they aid in gaining a firmer grip upon the weapon. Occasionally there are other *menuki* which decorate the scabbard (*saya*). When of a larger size than the ordinary, they are termed *kanamono* (literally, "hardware"), a most misleading term, for they are of a purely artistic nature and quality. This name is also applied to the fittings of the tobacco pouch (*tabako ire*).

The triangular opening in the centre of the *tsuba* is that into which

<sup>1</sup> Several detailed accounts are given by H. JOLY (Sword and Same, pp. 117-127).

<sup>2</sup> L. HEARN, Japan: an Interpretation, p. 139 (London, 1905).

<sup>3</sup> An average size for katana *tsuba* is 7.5 x 8 cm; for wakizashi *tsuba* 6.2 x 6.6 cm; for tanto *tsuba* 4.5 x 6 cm.

fits the metal band (*habaki*), that secures the tang.<sup>1</sup> In the case of a tsuba for a *wakizashi*, there are two openings on either side of this central one, called the *riohitsu*. These are often plugged with *shakudō* or pewter, indicating their transference to another sword. M. DE TRESSAN<sup>2</sup> states that katana tsuba never had two *hitsu*. Occasionally also there are two round openings near the edge of the guard. These are known as *udenuki ana*, holes through which is threaded the *udenuki*, a cord or loop of braid attached to the handle of the sword to keep it from slipping from the hand.

The *riohitsu* are the openings through which pass two of the most decorative fittings, the *kozuka* and the *kogai*. Each of these slips into a groove on either side of the scabbard, sometimes finished with a narrow, ornamented band at the top, called *uragawara*. The *kozuka* is the handle of a small knife (*ko katana*), with a single edge sometimes engraved with a poem or other motive, such as a sword with hilt in the shape of a *vajra*. The handle, though affording a limited field for the artist (9.05 by 1.03 cm), has been pleasingly ornamented, especially by the Gotō masters (see p. 60). The uses assigned to this small weapon have been many and various, some of which seem to be without foundation. "It is only in a few cheap novels and late prints of theatrical plays that the *kozuka* with its blade is thrown at an enemy, and the origin of the tale which makes of it and the *kogai* kinds of skewers with which to identify the enemy one has killed in battle, would be highly interesting; in truth, the *kogatana* on the sword goes back to hoary antiquity, and it had its uses as a small knife, say of a pocket-knife."<sup>3</sup>

The *kogai*, on the other hand, does not possess a blade, but is in the form of a skewer, either of one piece or divided lengthwise through the centre. This latter form, called *warikogai*, was probably used as a pair of chopsticks or as hairpins to re-arrange the disheveled locks of the warrior. H. Joly traces the origin of the *kogai* to the hairpin and in connection with Chinese crowns (*kamizashi*). This object is also decorated, as is the *kozuka*, on the handle. Together with the *menuki*, these

<sup>1</sup> Generally the *habaki* is a band of bronze or copper covered with gilt and hatched with diagonal markings which tend to "bite" the scabbard and secure the sword from slipping. E. GILBERTSON (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. I, p. 79) speaks of two decorated *habaki*, one of gold decorations by *Sōmin*, one of *shakudō nanako* with relief of gold in Gotō style. Such decorations are rare.

<sup>2</sup> *Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 57.

<sup>3</sup> H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 97. This is probably a rejoinder to remarks made by A. DOISY (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. III, p. 101), or has reference to Hokusai's drawing reproduced by S. BING (*Artistic Japan*, Vol. I, p. 133). An early dug-out tsuba reproduced by OKABE KAKUYA (*Japanese Sword Guards*, p. 7) shows an opening for a *kozuka*.



three fittings are styled *mitokoromono* ("objects of three places"). On the fine old swords they were made by the same artist with extreme care. The word *soroimono* is the term applied to a set of fittings made by one artist, which includes the *mitokoromono*, as well as the *fuchikashira*.

In distinguishing the katana from the tachi, there has already been mentioned the *kurigata* and the *sageo*, by means of which the katana is secured in the belt. The lower end of the scabbard of both the katana and the wakizashi is capped by a decorative fitting called the *kojiri*, which is often similar to the *fuchi*, without the openings at the side. The *kojiri* is occasionally elongated on the smaller weapons. A familiar design is the lobster, generally of copper, whose antennae stretch up the side of the scabbard; or a common decoration is a monkey, executed in iron, whose long arm reaches up toward the other mounts which may represent a persimmon or an equally desirable object, such as the moon.

On all these fittings there is evidenced the mastery of technique characteristic of the Japanese artist and craftsman. Not only has he employed iron and steel moulded and treated so as to produce many varied effects, colors, and surfaces; he has also mixed certain precious metals into alloys of indescribable shades and beauty, gaining unusual colors through pickling processes. These alloys were used with the greatest effectiveness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The following data concerning alloys have been culled from the excellent article by W. GOWLAND.<sup>1</sup>

The alloy *par excellence* is called *karakane* ("Chinese metal"). It is quite distinct from bronze, since it contains lead as an essential constituent. *Karakane* is a name applied to a varied group of mixtures of metals of the copper-tin-lead series in which the proportions of copper may range from 71 to 89 per cent; of tin, from 2 to 8 per cent; and of lead, from 5 to 15 per cent.

*Sentoku*, a yellow bronze, consists of copper, tin, and zinc, and occupies an intermediate position between *karakane* and brass.

*Shakudō* is a purely Japanese alloy which is of a dark copper color when cast; however, after being treated in a boiling solution (see p. 92 of article referred to), it assumes a blue black or violet patina which is very beautiful. There are no less than fifteen grades of *shakudō*. The presence of at least 4 per cent of gold is absolutely essential to obtain the finest black surface with the violet sheen. The analysis of a good quality of *shakudō* shows 4.16 per cent gold, .08 per cent silver, and 95.77 per cent copper. This alloy possesses physical properties which are of ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Metals and Metal Working in Old Japan (*Transactions of Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 20-100).

treme importance to the worker of metals. It can be cast into any form, can be hammered into sheets, and drawn into wire.

*Shibuichi* is of equal importance in ornamental metal-work with shakudō, and is likewise a Japanese product. Its name denotes that it consists of one part of silver in four of the alloy; that is, one part of silver is alloyed with three parts of copper. *Shibuichi* is rather a general than a specific name, as under it must be included several other alloys, particularly *sambo-gin*, consisting of one part silver and two parts copper. This combination is the one chiefly used for sword-mounts. As is the case with shakudō, this alloy when cast possesses no beauty, its color being similar to a pale gun-metal or common bronze. When subjected to appropriate treatment in boiling solutions, it assumes a patina of charming shades of gray which gives it a unique position among art alloys.



### III. TSUBA OF SWORDSMITHS AND ARMORERS KANAYAMA AND SHINGEN TSUBA

The subject of the form and decoration of the tsuba of the Japanese sword, used between the periods Gempei (twelfth century) and Ashikaga (fourteenth to sixteenth century), is a question which has been much discussed, and with scant result as to a definite conclusion. It must be remembered that in that period occurred the wars between the Minamoto and Taira clans, the Mongolian invasion, the fall of Kamakura, and that bitter civil war which commenced in the Ōnin period (1467-68), and out of which emerged the organizations of the daimyō which became fully developed under the Tokugawa shōguns. Undoubtedly the fighting sword used in these troubled times was equipped with a stout tsuba. It is generally conceded by those who have gone deeply into this subject, that the early iron guards were solid and plain, the work of swordsmiths and armorers. H. JOLY<sup>1</sup> differentiates between the tsuba of these two groups of workers in the following observation: "Authorities agree that the swordsmiths' guards were thick and rimless, those of the armorers, on the contrary, thin in the web with a thick rim to strengthen them." They were circular, oval, or after the fifteenth century of *mokkō* form, —a shape which resembles the *aoi* tsuba, being oval and quadrilobed, the four indentations sometimes so pronounced as to make the tsuba almost cruciform and again in later times, especially as used by Gotō Ichijō in the nineteenth century, so slightly indented as only to suggest the *mokkō* outline. Probably the work of the armorers was of iron, while that of the swordsmiths was likely of steel, the metal which they forged with exceeding skill. Undoubtedly they calculated with an extreme nicety to balance the blade with a tsuba of proper lightness or weight for effective wielding. Few of these early tsuba seem to have survived the ages, probably for the reason that they were cast into the furnace as the fashion for decoration came in, and the metal was redeemed for future use. The hammer-marks on the tsuba which remain to answer the description vary from the mere irregularities of folded and pounded iron to those more decorative marks left by the tools of the armorer. Simple diaper patterns inlaid in brass, suggestive likewise of armor, may also be of this period and the work of armorers. With the advent of the early Portuguese adventurers in the sixteenth century, firearms

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<sup>1</sup> Japanese Art and Handicraft, p. 98.

were introduced which, with their inlaid surfaces, augmented to a great degree this style of decoration. The daimyō were keenly anxious to obtain the weapons of the foreigners; for the authority of the Ashikaga shōguns had been cast off, and each chief was striving for local supremacy.<sup>1</sup>

In the following illustrations four tsuba are reproduced which picture certain of these foregoing types. They may be attributed to the fifteenth and sixteenth century makers, all are unsigned, for it was not until the seventeenth century that it became customary to inscribe the name on the seppa dai. The first is a large circular tsuba of black iron without any riohitsu (Plate III, Fig. 2). The surface is covered with hammer-marks characteristic of the blows left by armorer's tools. Encircling the edge are crude forms suggesting plum-blossoms, while the centre of the tsuba has upon it two concentric rows of marks resembling fallen petals.

The three other tsuba are decorated with inlay of two distinct kinds. The design on Fig. 3 is brought out by the process known as *honzōgan* ("true inlay"). There is first cut into the metal foundation a groove or patch, as the case may be, in the form of the decoration to be inlaid. Into this is hammered the contrasting metal. In later work, such as was brought to perfection by the Nara and Hamano workers, the groove was narrower at the top than the base, so that when the inlay was hammered in, it was thus secured tightly. When *honzōgan* is flat, it is known as *hirazōgan*; when projecting above the surface, it is called *takazōgan*. Brass wire is the material inlaid on each of these guards, and though it unfortunately has come loose or entirely disappeared in spots, the design may clearly be traced on both tsuba. The first is a large circular guard, both sides of which are covered, save the space immediately surrounding the opening for the blade, with a diaper pattern suggestive of bamboo weaving, known as *kago-ami* ("basket weave"). The second, also of iron, is of *mokkō* form, and has a perforation for the insertion of a *kozuka* (Plate IV, Fig. 1). The obverse of this guard is covered with a design known as the "Korean wave pattern," more properly a Chinese diaper pattern representing waves. At the right floats a peony blossom from which flames issue, an interesting motive, but one whose meaning is obscure. The peony (*botan*) was brought over to Japan from China, where it bears the name *fu kuei hua* ("flower of riches and honor"). Possibly the flames suggest fame, as the peony is the "king of flowers." On the reverse of the same tsuba, two diaper pat-

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<sup>1</sup> W. GRIFFIS, *Mikado's Empire*, p. 248.



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1, TSUBA WITH DECORATION IN HONZŌGAN (p. 38) AND 2, NUNOME-ZŌGAN (p. 39).

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terns are inlaid on the field divided longitudinally. On the left is a design of tendrils, termed *karakusa*; on the right, the swastika (*manji*) fret,—a swastika combined with a key pattern. Though this mystic diagram may have been used as a decoration prior to the introduction of Buddhism from China, in A.D. 552, it now has the same significance in Japan as in China: it is regarded as the symbol of Buddha's heart, as well as the mark for "ten thousand."

Strongly resembling these two tsuba in appearance is Fig. 2 in Plate IV, presumably of the same period. The design, however, is brought out in silver and inlaid by a process distinctly different from *honzōgan*, known as *nunome-zōgan*. *Nunome* means "cloth meshes," and describes a cross-hatching which is cut or filed over the field to be inlaid, making an effect like the texture of weaving. On this roughened surface is hammered the contrasting metal, which adheres to the teeth-like projections raised by the cross-hatching. In the case of the delicate design, such as the three diaper patterns on the tsuba under consideration, the ground must have been prepared with great care, lest the filings extend beyond the surface to be inlaid. This tsuba of brown iron is slightly oval, with an opening for *kozuka* and long slender perforations on either side, probably made to lessen the weight. The *kago-ami* diaper is again used, this time in combination with a star-like diaper, and a third all-over pattern called the *shippō tsunagi no wuchimi hana-bishi*, that is to say, a *hanabishi* ("flower-diamond") within a connected *shippō*. The *shippō*, of Indian-Buddhistic origin, are the seven precious things, generally enumerated as gold, silver, emerald, coral, agate, crystal, and pearl. These materials were used as inlay on many objects, and thus the name *shippō* has come to describe the cloisonné enamel in Japan.<sup>1</sup> The *shippō* form in this design is likely the pearl. The "*hana-bishi* within a connected *shippō*" is one of the *takaramono* ("precious things") associated with the Seven Gods of Luck (*Shichifukujin*), who travel in the *takarabune* ("treasure-ship") loaded with these precious objects. The *hana* ("flower") used as the centre of the design is the blossom of the water-caltrop (*Tropa incisa*, Japanese *hishi*), which bears a prism-shaped nut; hence anything in the shape of a prism is styled *hishi-gata* ("diamond-shaped").<sup>2</sup> This diaper pattern appears in lacquer, brocade, pottery, and enamel, and was adopted as a crest by Matura, daimyō of Katsumoto.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See J. BOWES, Notes on Shippō; also C. SALWEY, Japanese Enamels Ancient and Modern (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. VII, pp. 228-247).

<sup>2</sup>J. BOWES, Japanese Pottery, p. 472.

<sup>3</sup>H. STROHL, Japanisches Wappenbuch Nihon Moncho, p. 132.

Contemporaneous, if not of earlier date, are the tsuba reproduced in Plates V and VI. They are of iron and covered with a patina of fine smoothness. While age has undoubtedly done much to produce this "skin," it is more than likely that one of the several methods known as *sabi-dashikata* ("rust-summoning process") was applied to some of these tsuba. The old iron workers had recipes for producing patina, which they guarded with great secrecy and kept among their *hiden* ("secret processes") handed down from generation to generation. Some of these methods have been outlined in published accounts, but almost all serious searchers after authentic information on tsuba agree that these same accounts are intended to deceive rather than instruct. The one quoted by F. BRINKLEY<sup>1</sup> is typical and full of quaint fancies. Once the patina has become scratched or rubbed, the tsuba loses much of its value; for it is the color and "feel" of the iron, as well as the handling and design, which combine to make the artistic appeal of these tsuba. It is very difficult to restore a patina that has become harmed. From a personal letter of JOLY, who spent much of his time on the study of Japanese sword-mounts, and who left the most valuable information which we have concerning them, is quoted the following paragraph:—

"The problem of patinating iron and Japanese alloys is far from simple; I have worked at it for more years than I care to remember, and have collected many recipes, some of which *do* work.—In years gone by I can still remember a dozen or so bottles of pickling solutions gathering dust on the shelves of my laboratory, some of which worked on shakudō, others on shibuichi, which one day were *all* turned into a larger bottle, and the resulting mess, the composition of which is wholly unknown, does patinate anything it is applied to.—Thank goodness I have enough of it to last as long as I shall, unless the bottle gets broken!"

The "resulting mess" was never analyzed, and unfortunately Mr. Joly's valuable researches were brought to a close by his premature death in 1920.

In the laboratories of Field Museum of Natural History, H. W. Nichols, Associate Curator in the Department of Geology, has made interesting experiments in patinating iron and steel, having reduced the elaborate and sometimes unattainable ingredients of the Japanese recipes to certain chemical substitutes which combine to produce like effects. It is hoped that to those desirous of restoring patina who have read in despair of "the clay from a certain Kyōto cemetery" and "the charcoal ashes over which eels have been roasted," and such Japanese fancies

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<sup>1</sup> Japan and China, Vol. VII, p. 238.



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2

IRON TSUBA OF EARLY PERIOD (pp. 40-41).

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IRON TSUBA WITH DECORATION CHISELLED IN SILHOUETTE (pp. 42-44).

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necessary to produce patina, the account in the Appendix (p. 163) will prove useful.

The guard reproduced in Plate V, Fig. 1, is of characteristic early simplicity, and covered with a patina which gives a wax-like effect to the iron. Of medium thickness and circular, the tsuba is decorated with two chiselled grooves, bounded by fine lines. The holes for kozuka and kogai are plugged with shakudō.

An exceptional example of early iron work, giving forth when struck a clear bell-like sound, is to be seen in Plate V, Fig. 2. It is of brown iron with a smooth patina, and in form suggests a six-petaled flower. Each lobe is delicately outlined with a finely cut line terminating in a scroll. A deep groove is cut in the centre, probably with the purpose of lessening the weight. The foldings of the iron can be clearly seen when examining the guard in a good light.

Of the type of tsuba termed *Kanayama*, very few examples have been pictured in the various works on sword-fittings. M. DE TRESSAN,<sup>1</sup> in his series of articles "L'Evolution de la garde de sabre japonaise," speaks of certain tsuba which he ascribes to the thirteenth and fourteenth century as "rather large, very thin, circular, and frequently with a rounded flange. The surface, while not polished, does not have the depressions which are to be seen on sixteenth-century pieces. The patina is dark, and the decoration consists of sober negative silhouettes (*kage zukashi*), representing radishes, cloves, plum-blossoms, and the like, conventionalized." In a later article, the same author<sup>2</sup> characterizes certain tsuba as "Kanayama in Yamashiro, which from the end of the sixteenth century produced silhouettes, often with the motive of the calabash, dear to Hideyoshi (No. 1272 of the collection of Gillot; a thin guard of large size, with projecting flange decorated in a negative silhouette of calabash flowers and crests)."

This last description accords well with the Kanayama tsuba selected for illustration by OKABE KAKUYA in his catalogue of sword-guards exhibited at the Fine Arts Museum, Boston, in 1908. The date attributed to that specimen in the sixteenth century. The name Kanayama has met with wide discussion; even JOLY seemed embarrassed when in his review

<sup>1</sup> *Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Jap.*, Vols. XVIII, XIX, XX, XXII, XXV, XXVI, XXVII.

<sup>2</sup> *La garde de sabre japonaise* (*Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Vol. I, p. 296). According to GRIFFIS (*Mikado's Empire*, p. 238), "Hideyoshi's banner consisted of a cluster of gourds. At first it was a single gourd. After each battle another was added until at last it became an imposing sheaf. The standard bearer carried aloft at the head of the columns a golden representation of the original model, and wherever Hideyoshi's banner moved, there was the centre of victory."

of M. DE TRESSAN's articles<sup>1</sup> he asked the following question: "Does any one know definitely what was called Kanayama tsuba in the seven-teenth or eighteenth centuries, or are we all groping in the dark?"

Though the first specimen on Plate VI might be labeled by some "Kanayama," it seems wiser and less dogmatic to do as others have done, and group similar early pieces under "archaic tsuba." Undoubtedly such guards are excellent representations of the earliest tsuba with perforated designs, which were evidently applied with an idea of decoration. Other earlier perforations were not of a preconceived, decorative character, but were mainly made to lessen the weight.

This tsuba (Plate VI, Fig. 1), presumably of sixteenth-century workmanship, accords in detail with De Tressan's first description of Kanayama tsuba cited above. It is large, thin, of brown iron, and perforated with designs representing a plum-blossom and three cloves. The plum (*ume*), symbol of longevity, is an ever present motive in Japanese art. The clove (*chōji*) is more unusual, though often seen with the takaramono, where it has replaced the rhinoceros-horn (*chūeh*) of the Chinese in their series of precious objects, known as the *pa pao*. In Japan, the clove is used as a perfume and purifier, being steeped in hot water above the charcoal brazier known as the *chōji-buro*. The clove has been adopted as the motive for several crests, among these that of Matsudaira, daimyō of Kameyama; but it is hardly safe to say that this design here is a primitive form of crest and thus the insignia for any particular family, though such a theory is tenable.

Another tsuba reproduced in Plate VI, Fig. 2, is also of brown iron and decorated with a perforated design. This guard is likely the work of an armorer of the Myōchin family (p. 50), whose early members made tsuba with raised rims, and who occasionally added slight perforations. While very thin in the web, the edge is rounded and heavy. The only decoration is a conch-shell (*hora*) in openwork, which is one of the most important of the "eight happy omens" (*pa chi hsiang*), which are among the signs to be seen on the Buddha's feet. The *hora* signalizes the voice of Buddha. The travelling Buddhist priests of Japan, belonging to the Shugendō sect and called Yamabushi ("mountain warriors"), carried along with their travelling box, rosary, and sword, a trumpet made of a conch-shell, such as was used by chieftains. As is mentioned in the introduction, these warrior priests became thoroughly militarized in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; and, living in the monastery of Hiyeizan, they were a constant menace to the peace of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Vol. I, p. 369.



capital. They were well stocked with weapons, and it is not improbable that this tsuba with the significant conch was made to adorn one of their swords.

Skillfully cut in negative silhouette is the dragon-fly, to be seen in Fig. 3 of Plate VI. The tsuba is thin, of dark brown iron, and resembles the work of the armorers. A larger guard with rounded rim, but with a similar design and like treatment is attributed by P. VAUTIER<sup>1</sup> to the Myōchin workers of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. This motive, the dragon-fly (*akitsu*), is generally accepted as the symbol of the kingdom of Japan, and the origin of the idea is traced to the legend recounted in the Kojiki and Nihongi of the Emperor Jimmu's view of the island from a mountain top. He is said to have thought the kingdom looked like a dragon-fly touching its tail with its mouth. From this it received its name Akitsu-shima. CHAMBERLAIN,<sup>2</sup> in his translation of the Kojiki, disagrees, however, with this interpretation of the word *akitsu*.

The design which is chiselled in openwork on a fourth tsuba of this period is one of great antiquity and one whose significance has caused much ink to flow (Plate VI, Fig. 4). It consists of two comma-shaped figures called *futatsu* ("two") *tomoye*. When three such motives are grouped together, the design is known as *mitsu* ("three") *tomoye* (see Plate X, Fig. 1). The *tomoye* is almost identical in shape with the *magatama*, prehistoric ornaments cut from various stones and found in the dolmens along with tubular and round beads. Whether the *tomoye* represents a *magatama* is a question worthy of consideration. When in the form of the *futatsu-tomoye*, this design is similar to the Chinese diagram *yang* and *yin*, representing the masculine and feminine principles of nature. The *mitsu-tomoye* is thought by some to represent these two principles plus the creative element. This interpretation seems reasonable, especially when the design is applied to the mallet of the God of Wealth, Daikoku (Plate LV, Fig. 3), which, when struck, is empowered to create great riches. But as the same design appears on the drums of the Thunder God, Raiden (Plate XXXI, Fig. 3), on ridge-poles and tiles of roofs, one is inclined to lay particular stress on the remarks of M. DE VISSER.<sup>3</sup> "The more I reflect upon it, the more I feel inclined to accept Hirth's explanation of the *mitsu-tomoe* and *futatsu-tomoe* ('two commas') as the rolling thunder. Its frequent appearance on lanterns, flags, tiles, and in olden times, on the *tomo* or leather shield

<sup>1</sup> *Japanische Stichblätter und Schwertzieraten*, Sammlung G. Oeder, p. 2, No. 3.

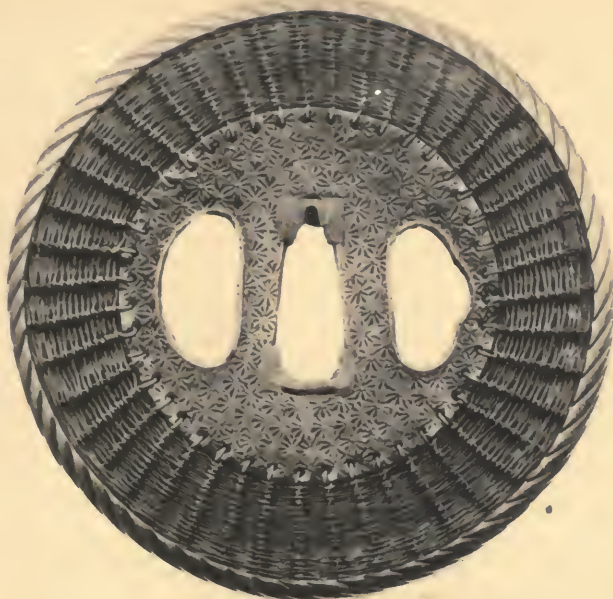
<sup>2</sup> *Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. I, pp. 13 and 135.

<sup>3</sup> *The Dragon in China and Japan*, p. 105.

worn around the wrist by archers, and its frequent use as a badge of arms may be explained by its magic power, averting evil and, in some cases, bringing fertilizing rains. I formerly believed it to be the *yang* and *yin* symbol, the third comma being the *t'ai kih* (the primordium, from which *yang* and *yin* emanate). This primordium, which in China is represented by the whole figure, should by mistake have been represented by the Japanese by means of a third comma. *Yang* and *yin*, light and darkness, however, are represented by one white and one black figure, somewhat resembling commas and forming together a circle. It would be very strange if the ancient Japanese, who closely imitated the Chinese models, had altered this symbol in such a way that its fundamental meaning got lost; for replacing the two white and black commas with two or three black ones would have had this effect. Moreover, in Japanese divination, based on the Chinese diagrams, the original Chinese symbol of *yang* and *yin* is always used and placed in the midst of the eight diagrams. Thus the *futatsu-tomoe* and *mitsu-tomoe* are apparently quite different from this symbol, and Hirth rightly identifies them with the ancient Chinese spiral, representing thunder. Moreover, I found the same explanation of the *tomoe* in the Japanese work *Shiojiri*, which gives a picture of two kinds of spirals, ancient symbols of thunder and clouds. Finally, on Japanese prints the dragon is often accompanied by a huge spiral, representing the thunderstorm caused by him."

One should add the observations of A. J. Koop,<sup>1</sup> "One of the most fascinating motives is the *tomoye* or comma-shape, upon the origin, significance, and etymology of which much has been written. In blazoning a *mon* founded upon the *tomoye*, it is important to notice the direction taken by the tail of the comma; when this is clockwise, the blazonry is *migi-domoye* or 'right comma' and conversely *hidari-domoye* ('left comma'). The *hidari mitsu domoye* ('three left commas') is found as the *mon* of several Shintō shrines. Five daimyō families also bore the three left-hand commas as their chief *mon*, and we find it used by several other prominent families, notably the Shō, who have in their time held the kingship of the Luchu Archipelago. Two right-hand commas forming a circle, the heads side by side, compose the *mon* which is blazoned as *migi-futatsu domoye*, and serves as an identification mark in representations of the most popular figure in recent Japanese history—Oishi Yoshio (or Kuranosuke) whose noble leadership of the band of forty-seven faithful samurai is the subject of numberless novels, plays, and sets of prints."

<sup>1</sup> Construction and Blazonry of Mon (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. IX, p. 305).



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TWO TYPES OF SHINGEN TSUBA (p. 45).

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An unusual group of tsuba popular in the late sixteenth century and afterwards is made up of those guards known as *Shingen* tsuba, a name which was derived from a sixteenth-century warrior, Takeda Shingen (Takeda Harunobu, 1521-73), who is said to have preferred this style of guard, as it combined strength and lightness. Under the category "Shingen," four different types are generally listed, though a fifth appears in the drawing in the Boston Catalogue of OKABE KAKUYA "Japanese Sword Guards" (p. 21). It is square, that form which is said to have been used in Ashikaga days for scaling walls, the sword having been set up as a step. Another virtue, which has been pointed out, is that the square tsuba prevented the sword from rolling when laid down. The following descriptions include, however, the Shingen tsuba usually met with.

1. So-called Mukade ("centipede") tsuba are made of iron in which a centipede is inlaid in brass or copper wire. Mukade tsuba of Myōchin and Umetada workmanship have been found with the inscription, "Made to the taste of Takeda Shingen."

2. There are those of solid iron, with neat centres of brass, to the edges of which is affixed a weaving of brass and copper wires which is bound to the foundation disk by a rim, usually decorated simply.

3. Another type is of solid iron, bored at intervals and laced with braided or twisted wires of copper and brass.

4. The fourth type is a chrysanthemoid form, chiselled in open work and laced or woven tightly with copper and brass wire.

The second and third types appear on Plate VII. Fig. 1 is circular with a centre of brass covered with hammer-marks similar to those on the tsuba in Plate III, Fig. 2. To this brass disk is affixed a core of woven wires of copper and brass, covering over a thin iron field. The whole is bounded by a rim of shibuichi engraved to represent a rope. This specimen, though probably of seventeenth or eighteenth century workmanship, is an excellent example of this type of Shingen tsuba. The other guard (Plate VII, Fig. 2) is of *mokkō* form and entirely of iron with a dark brown patina. The edge is outlined in a relief of two wires of brass, one plain, the other twisted. Within the field are two more reliefs of wire combinations which accentuate the *mokkō* outline, and which appear to be held in place by the passage of wires through sixteen drilled openings. Through the outer eight openings wires pass over the edge of the guard crossing at intervals. This tsuba may safely be ascribed to the sixteenth or seventeenth century.

#### IV. KANEIYE AND THE MYŌCHIN FAMILY

Under the Ashikaga shōguns (1338-1573) the power of the military governors (*shugo*) increased to such an extent that there was established between them and their retainers *djito* (literally, "chief of the land") a vassalage which severed the direct communication between the latter and the shōgun as it had existed in former times. At the same time the *shugo* were not strong enough to completely control these minor landholders. Insurrections between them occurred constantly, and the frontier lines were continually being disputed and shifted. Japan was literally torn asunder into a number of semi-independent bodies, with masters ever-changing.<sup>1</sup>

Under these circumstances the sword took on an added importance. In the various provinces, schools of metal-workers developed who devoted their entire time toward the making of armor and especially toward the perfecting and embellishing of the sword for the resident feudal lords. In spite of the dark aspect of these times, great artists arose, such as the landscape painter Sesshū and the master worker in metal, Kaneiye, both of whom bear witness to the statement that the arts, in the Ashikaga period, advanced to a remarkable degree. There occurred during those years a renaissance of the Chinese influence which left its traces in all branches of art; for Ashikaga Yoshimitsu and Ashikaga Yoshimasa are among the great patrons who worked intensively for their nation's growth along cultural lines.

Although Gotō Yujō (1435 or 1440-1512), whose work is discussed in a following chapter, is conceded to have been the originator of working in relief as a form of decorative art in metal, to Kaneiye must be granted the place as first having applied upon iron tsuba the processes which Gotō Yujō used only upon the smaller sword ornaments. The date of the first Kaneiye is one of the much debated questions in the involved study of sword-guards. M. DE TRESSAN,<sup>2</sup> in his chapter on Kaneiye, after discussing the opinions of Hayashi, Hara, and other authorities, has come to the conclusion that he must have flourished during the period 1480-1530, between the time of Gotō Yujō and Nobuiye I, of whom some would make him a pupil. OKABE KAKUYA<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> K. HARA, Introduction to the History of Japan, pp. 216-217.

<sup>2</sup> L'Évolution de la garde de sabre japonaise (*Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vols. XIX-XX, p. 20).

<sup>3</sup> Japanese Sword Guards, p. 46.

also places him in the sixteenth century; and H. JOLY, in the last of his excellent catalogues on Japanese tsuba, says, "The name Kaneiye has been adopted by several craftsmen, the first of whom lived at the end of the Ashikaga period, and is usually termed Ōshōdai Kaneiye (Mr. Akiyama says that his work was an improvement on the Ōnin tsuba); others Shōdai and Mei jin Shōdai, followed him closely, and others again imitated him, either before 1600 or afterwards."<sup>1</sup> Lastly, as to the date of the founding of the Kaneiye school, BASHFORD DEAN,<sup>2</sup> in his luminous chapter on Kaneiye, observes, "The first generation appears to have flourished during the last quarter of the sixteenth century—some experts say much earlier, even a century. The second generation dates roundly from 1600 to 1650, and the third generation from the middle to the end of the seventeenth century."

It may be seen from the stress put upon this question, in what importance Kaneiye tsuba are held. Out of the many thousand signed ones whose signatures generally read "Made by Kaneiye, who lived in Fushimi in Yamashiro" (and these have probably been added long afterwards), there are very few genuine Kaneiye tsuba, as a collector will readily realize when he has the fortune to look upon an authentic work from the master's hand. Three distinct Kaneiye who worked before the eighteenth century are thought to have existed, judging from the technique and decoration of specimens determined as originals.

The tsuba of Kaneiye Shōdai are usually of elongated, oval form or occasionally of *mokkō* form, of a very hard quality of iron, the subjects of decoration being personages, classical, or religious, sculptured in sharp relief, with inlay of silver or gold on the faces and ornaments. The form of tsuba known as *kobushigata*, in outline resembling a closed fist (*kobushi*), is said to have been introduced by him.

Kaneiye Nidai, whose work is held by most experts as superior to Kaneiye Shōdai, worked in lower relief with great simplicity, and exquisitely depicted the landscapes so suggestive of Sesshū and the Kanō school. A characteristic of Kaneiye Nidai is the finishing of the edge, which is often irregular and bordered by a folding over of the metal in very low relief.

The third Kaneiye, whose tsuba are heavy and generally round, preferred birds and flowers as his subjects of decoration. The tsuba of

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<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 109. See also M. DE TRESSAN, *Quelques problèmes relatifs à l'histoire de la garde de sabre japonaise* (*Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Vol. II, pp. 434-436).

<sup>2</sup> Notes on Arms and Armor, p. 69.



all three are remarkable for the effect of pliability which has been given to the carefully worked iron. In the early specimens the reliefs of precious metals are sparing, but applied with remarkable effectiveness, while the later followers of the Kaneiye school frequently used gold and silver in higher relief.

Since the greatness of the Kaneiye artists was recognized even by their contemporaries, numerous followers and copyists of varying degrees of ability sprang up and endeavored to supply the demand for these desirable tsuba. As was observed above, there are thousands of guards signed "Kaneiye," many of which are very evidently poor copies or late productions. Distinctions have been worked out by which the genuine signatures may be identified, such as a sharp cutting of the hook stroke in the *iye*, but it is not safe to rely on these incidental facts. The art expressed, and the treatment of the medium of the tsuba under consideration, are the only real bases on which to test a genuine Kaneiye.

To appreciate the meaning and appeal of these artists, one must consider the philosophy of the Zen sect of Buddhism, which had such an influence on Sesshū, the artist from whose works came much of the inspiration of the three Kaneiye, especially Kaneiye Nidai. In the revival of Chinese culture in the Ashikaga period, there appeared in the paintings of many artists, especially Sesshū, that spirit of the grand calm of nature which followers of the Zen sect sought for in their practice of deep contemplation and the mental concentration on the absolute. "The Zen sect was the most influential among the samurai class in old Japan, and still has many adherents among educated men. Through the practice of Zazen, its believers acquired presence of mind, calm resignation to destiny, renunciation of worldly desires and, above all, fearlessness before death, all these qualities greatly contributing to the formation of the spirit of Japan called Bushidō."<sup>1</sup>

This Buddhistic spirit pervades certain of the tsuba of the Kaneiye to a remarkable degree. On these limited fields and through the recalcitrant medium of iron, these masters have in rare cases captured and interpreted some truly noble landscapes. The close of man's earthly career and the still solitude of the tomb are remarkably suggested on the *mokkō*-formed guard in Plate VIII, Fig. 1.

On the reverse, a silver crescent moon shining over a stone lantern sheds her faint light upon bedewed grasses, touched with silver and gold, and bending close to the uneven ground. A skull with the teeth in

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<sup>1</sup> KATO NAOSHI, *Eastern Ideas and the Japanese Spirit* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII, p. 121).





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IRON TSUBA OF KANEIYE SCHOOL (pp. 48-50).



relief of silver lies exposed to the elements and half covered in the grasses on the obverse side, where the same uneven surface tends to give a note of ruggedness and mystery in the varying shadows. The dark brown iron is wax-like and so modelled as to give the appearance of pliability. The votive stone lantern, a typical form seen in the cemeteries, has been chiselled out of the iron and filled in with a gray pewter covered with punches which tend to produce a stone-like surface. The guard is signed *Kaneiye Yamashiro Kuni Fushimi jū* ("Kaneiye who lived in Fushimi in Yamashiro"). It was acquired early in the eighties in Japan by Edward Greey, and bears all the marks of being a genuine product of the first Kaneiye.

The two other examples herein illustrated are in the style of Kaneiye Nidai, who, we are told by S. Hara and others, came from the family Aoki. He also lived in Fushimi in Yamashiro and later moved to the province of Higo. Two other names, Jūbei and Tetsunin ("Iron Man" or "Iron Kernel") were used by him, according to S. Hara and the *Honcho ko-kon zan ko-fu ryaku*. The author of the latter book, Kuwa Hara Mago-no-jo, mentions the fact that in Yamashiro there is iron very suitable for swords and sword-fittings.

Fig. 2 in Plate VIII is likewise signed *Kaneiye Yamashiro Kuni Fushimi jū*. With the same simplicity, a similarly large view of nature is encompassed within the small field of this almost circular iron guard. Above are mountains crowned with rugged trees, which rise as in mystery from a misty foreground, all suggestive of the Chinese landscape. On the very edge of the tsuba are two geese with golden bills, modelled in low relief, one stretching its long neck, calls to break the silence round about; the other, pushing through the low rushes, which are bedewed with silver drops, moves toward the water's edge rippled by a soft breeze and pictured on the reverse side of the guard. It has much of the quality of Kaneiye Nidai, but is more likely the work of one of his followers in the late seventeenth century.

Though unsigned, the third of the tsuba which represent this school of workers, was evidently made by an artist thoroughly imbued with the same lofty spirit as the Kaneiye themselves, and worked out with a feeling and technique worthy of his masters. The form is a modified *mokkō*, and the metal is also a soft brown iron. The subject, a favorite of the Zen followers, is full of allegorical meaning, reminding one of the "Song of the Ten Bulls" by Sokko Zenshi of the Sung dynasty (963-1279), a series of verses representing the fundamental

ideas of the Zen sect.<sup>1</sup> Above, cut in openwork, are clouds, before which rise high and bare mountain peaks, telling of a lonely and impressive mountain pass. Below, crossing a stream, which is merely intimated, is a lonely traveller. He wears a broad hat, and, seated on the back of a bull, holds in one hand a stick or flute, while the other hand rests on the back of the beast. The face and tiny hand are in relief of silver, the bridle and nose ring of the bull are of gold, as are the flecks of foam in the disturbed stream. On the reverse are low rushes near water-lines broken by one or two golden drops. The calm and repose herein suggested is evident even to a casual observer, and the deeper meaning attends those who are familiar with these classic verses of Zen teaching, cited above, telling of man's mastery of the animal forces of life, as he seeks to find his true self and his consequent harmony with the higher forces of nature.

Probably contemporaneous with Kaneiye was Myōchin Nobuiye, likewise a great artist. Mention has been made in the foregoing pages of the work of the Myōchin armorers, and some of the tsuba bearing marks characteristic of their workmanship have been described and illustrated (Plate VI). The members of this famous family are said to have been the court armorers from the twelfth century to the eighteenth, Munesuke being credited with the production of the famous helmet of Yoshitsune (1159-89), faithfully portrayed in Fig. 1, Plate XLVIII, which is now in the monastery on Mount Kuruma, and which, on account of its elaborate reliefs of precious metals, is doubted by some to be of so early a period.

The tsuba of the armorers generally are found to be of iron, either plain or with sober designs chiselled in negative silhouette. The foldings of the layers of iron (*mokume ji*; literally, "wood grain"), which can be distinguished on close examination, add greatly to the beauty of these objects and lead us to agree with H. Joly that the Myōchin must have been taught tsuba-making by the swordsmiths who forged the blades from layers of iron of varying hardness.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, many of the Myōchin are known to have been swordsmiths themselves, several members of this family being listed with the pre-eminent Masamune.

With the advent of Nobuiye, the seventeenth Myōchin, the processes of the armorer appeared on the sword-guard; forceful designs, primarily of dragons executed in repoussé, suggest some of the motives which

<sup>1</sup> Cf. KATO NAOSHI (Eastern Ideas and the Japanese Spirit, *Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII, p. 116) for a full reading of the verses.

<sup>2</sup> For detailed account of the process of producing *mokume ji*, cf. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, pp. 245-247.



decorate the breast-plates and helmets made by these famous craftsmen. Nobuiye I, who has an outstanding place both as an armorer and a tsuba maker, was the son of Yoshiyasu, and lived at Shirai in Kōzuke in the first half of the sixteenth century. The years 1554 or 1564 have been given as the date of his death, which occurred in the seventy-ninth year of his age. Imitations of his work and forgeries of his name are almost as common as those of the Kaneiye. According to H. JOLY,<sup>1</sup> there are several artists of the name of Nobuiye, who resided in other provinces than Kōshū, and who must not be confused with Myōchin Nobuiye. He used many names, the tradition being that he called himself Yasuiye (not to be confused with the Yasuiye of the nineteenth century), until Takeda Harunobu rewarded him with the last character of his name "Nobu" in recognition of his talent. Other signatures used by him are here taken from S. HARA<sup>2</sup> and DE TRESSAN:<sup>3</sup> Sakon no Shōkan, Ōsumi no kami, Iyeyasu, Rakui, Kōshū Myōchin, Ujiye and Gakui.

The second Nobuiye, son of Nobuiye I, was named Ujiye, taking the name of Nobuiye II in 1550, and also signing his work Shichirodayū and Iyeyoshi. Sadaiye (1513-74), likewise a son of Nobuiye I, was the eighteenth Myōchin, and lived at Odawara and later in the province of Iga. He was also called Matahachirō and Hei roku.

Working from the information given in the *Sōken Kishō* (1781), M. de Tressan classifies the tsuba of Nobuiye in the three following categories,—(1) those decorated in *karakusa* ("floral scrolls"), characters of writing, and the tortoise-back design; (2) those in openwork and positive silhouette; (3) those in repoussé, hammered and chiselled in a remarkable style, imitating shells. The centipede seems also to have been a favorite motive with Nobuiye, and appears chased in low relief on an excellent specimen in the Naunton collection. This design may have been a favorite of Takeda Harunobu, who is said to have recognized the art of Nobuiye; for it will be remembered that he favored the Shingen tsuba which often were decorated with the centipede. Since the centipede is associated with Bishamon, the god of riches, whose aid is sought by warriors, this motive naturally would have its appeal as a decoration for the sword.

Many of the followers of Nobuiye adopted the tortoise-shell design for the ground pattern on their tsuba as well as the *mokume ji*, both of

<sup>1</sup> Japanese Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen, p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> L'Évolution de la garde du sabre japonaise. *Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol XX, p. 10.

which he used effectively. E. GILBERTSON<sup>1</sup> has traced the genealogy of this famous family and characterized the products of the leading members. Many of the followers of Nobuiye are listed in this article. Those who are represented by specimens in Field Museum of Natural History are the following:—

Munekuni, an artist not listed by S. Hara, but one who is probably identical with the Munekuni referred to by E. Gilbertson, who was called Iwami, and who lived at Aizu in the province of Mutsu about 1751-63.

Munenori, family name Myōchin, who worked in Tsuchiura in the province of Hitachi. He also used the name Yukiye.

Yoshihisa, family name Myōchin, worked in Echizen in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The tsuba on Plate IX, Fig. 1 is signed "Myōchin Munekuni." It is circular and of dark brown iron, chiselled to represent the bark of an old tree. This treatment is undoubtedly a development of the true *mokume ji* of the earlier Myōchin workers. At the top of the guard, on both the obverse and reverse sides, there is a branch of pine in relief, with needles inlaid in gold. Below at the right on the obverse, in high relief of copper, is the cast-off shell of a cicada (*semi*). This insect is the symbol of resurrection in China.<sup>2</sup>

The other specimen illustrated is of later date and also of interesting workmanship. It is signed on the obverse *Myōchin ki Munenori nukinde tansei kore wo tsukuru* ("Myōchin Munenori distinguished for great diligence made this"). On the reverse, the inscription reads, *Bunkyu gan nen shū getsu jō ran* ("In the early part of an autumn day in the first year of Bunkyū"; that is, 1861). The tsuba is of *mokkō* form, and is made of brown iron, chiselled to represent a helmet with small laminae. Both sides are identical, and the whole is very light on account of the fact that the "laminae" are rounded and hollow. Altogether it is a remarkable piece of chiselling. The seppa dai are separate plates affixed to either side, and each is unevenly notched on the edge. It is interesting to see the traditions of the early Myōchin armorers reflected in this helmet-like design of nineteenth-century workmanship.

<sup>1</sup> Genealogy of the Myōchin Family (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. I, pp. 111-127).

<sup>2</sup> B. LAUFER, *Jade*, p. 301. Cf. L. HEARN, *Shadowings*, pp. 71-102.



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2

IRON TSUBA BY LATE MYŌCHIN ARTISTS (p. 52).

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T SUBA OF FUSHIMI—YOSHIRO TYPE (pp. 53-55).

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## V. EARLY INLAYS: ŌNIN, FUSHIMI, YOSHIRO, TEMPŌ, HEIANJŌ, KAGA, GOMOKU ZŌGAN, SHŌAMI, AND AWA

It has become customary to class under the heading Fushimi-Yoshirō all iron guards decorated in flat *hirazōgan* of brass or in high relief of brass, which were made in the town of Fushimi in Yamashiro, where in 1589 Hideyoshi built his castle, and whither artists and artisans flocked in great numbers. However, this term includes such different types that a narrower classification is more desirable.

In the fifteenth century certain guards were made known as Ōnin tsuba, so called from the name of the period Ōnin (1467-68). The inlay is flat, either of copper, brass, or *sentoku*. These tsuba are usually thin in the web bounded by a rounded rim, and decorated with simple motives. An example in this collection is inlaid on either side in copper with a design of a horse's halter.

The term *Fushimi tsuba* generally describes those guards in which the designs of flowers, scrolls, cloves, and other decorations are inlaid in flat *hirazōgan* of brass, while *Yoshirō* is applied to those which are in higher relief and especially to the tsuba in which crests (*mon*) in open work and inlay form the decoration. Both of these types probably date from the sixteenth century. The name *Yoshirō* is derived from that of Koike Yoshirō who also signed his work Naomasa with the title Izumi-no-Kami, and who must have originated this style of decoration. M. de Tressan cites a tsuba with the signature of Yoshirō and the date 1533. It is in the collection of M. Jacoby of Berlin.

An interesting Fushimi tsuba may be studied from the illustration (Plate X, Fig. 1). It is of iron and carved in the round so that the solid portion forms the *mitsu-tomoye*, a design whose meaning has been discussed at length on p. 43. Each comma-shaped figure is inlaid in brass with an arabesque design of vines bearing the leaves and fruit of the gourd, a motive known to have been a favorite one of Hideyoshi, the general, who was ruling Japan at that time from his palace in Fushimi (see note on p. 41). The inlay is flat, and fine lines of surface engraving, called *kebori*, bring out the veins of the leaves.

Appearing on the same plate (Fig. 2) is another tsuba, also of Fushimi style. It is of a size larger than is ordinary, being in form square with rounded corners. On both sides, in low relief of brass, there are designs of broken folding fans (*ogi*) the remaining portions of

which are decorated with water lines and flecks of foam chiselled in *kebori*.

This decoration, the riddled *ogi*, probably refers to the incident which occurred at the battle of Dan-no-ura (see Plate XX, Fig. 2). Antoku, the boy emperor, had been given a fan decorated with a red sun-disk of the Kami, which the priest of Itsukushima declared would divert any arrows and thus protect the Taira boats. Accordingly, at the battle, the fan was secured to a bamboo pole and placed in the bow of the first ship, as they proceeded against the Minamoto. Some accounts have it that a beautiful girl stood just below the fan. Nasu-no-Yoichi of the Minamoto clan accepted the challenge, and riding into the waves, raised his bow and let fly his arrow, shattering the fan to pieces. Thus with this foreboding opening began the battle in which the power of the Taira family was hopelessly crushed and the might of the Minamoto established.

One of the earliest uses of brass inlay seems to have been of the type seen on the third tsuba in this group (Plate X, Fig. 3). Circular in form, it is divided into twelve sections, in six of which is hammered a crudely formed plum-blossom. The six other divisions are adorned with small bosses of brass in low relief, and the fields are outlined, as is the entire tsuba, with an uneven line of brass. Two tsuba of similar treatment are assigned by H. JOLY and K. TOMITA<sup>1</sup> to the sixteenth century.

The brass reliefs on Yoshirō guards are generally higher than those found on tsuba of the foregoing group. Conventionalized floral designs, such as the one in Plate X, Fig. 4, are common decorations. This *mokkō*-formed tsuba recalls the *aoi* form, perforated as it is with the four *aoi* leaves. The *aoi* outline is accentuated by a line of brass relief carved to represent a rope. The flowers and leaves which appear on both sides of the guard are finished with *kebori* chasing. Many Yoshirō tsuba are decorated with plum sprays, ginkō leaves, and the blossoms of the Chinese bell-flower, *kikyo* (*Platycodon grandiflora*), which appear on this specimen.

Examples of so-called Tempō tsuba may properly be listed among the early inlays, as the decoration on these particular guards is a peculiar type of incrustation of hammered brass. Tempō tsuba likewise were produced in the province of Yamashiro, probably at Sanoda, in the seventeenth century, although they are said to have originated during the second half of the sixteenth century in Nara, where an artist Tembō

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<sup>1</sup> Japanese Art and Handicraft, Plate cx, Nos. 127-128.

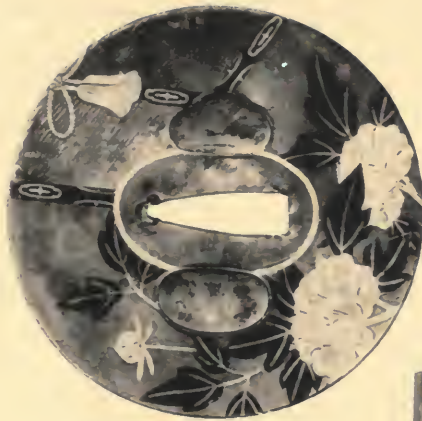




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1, TEMPŌ, 2, HEIANJŌ AND 3, KAGA TSUBA (pp. 55-57).

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(Ten hō) worked; he decorated his tsuba with figures stamped with a die before the final heating of the steel. The character *tem* appears most frequently upon these guards. This unusual method is employed by Hirokuni, an eighteenth-century artist of Sendai, by Mitsuhaya (nineteenth century) of Kyōto, and by Kiami, an eighteenth-century worker in Aki.

The Tempō tsuba (Plate XI, Fig. 1) is of iron with a surface made uneven by carving and stamping. Scattered along the edge of the guard are patches of brass in forms suggesting clouds which are broken by small punch-marks. At least two dies have been applied in stamping the iron, but the impressions of the characters are too incomplete for decipherment.

In the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, several Fushimi artists and artisans moved to the capital Kyōto, whose classic appellation is Heianjō. This name appears before the signatures of certain makers of iron tsuba, decorated, for the most part, with flat inlays of brass depicting animals and birds, sometimes treated in a grotesque manner.<sup>1</sup> The design of a spirited pony running through grasses has been chosen for the decoration of the obverse side of a typical, unsigned Heianjō tsuba in Plate XI, Fig. 2. At either side of the animal there is an hexagonal design, probably a crude form of crest, in the centre of which a single cross is inlaid. On the reverse side, also inlaid in brass, are horse trappings, such as a bridle, saddle, and stirrups.

Similar subjects were executed by later Heianjō artists in chasing in the round (*marubori*). Occasionally touches of gold (*munome-zōgan*) were applied to portions of these sculptured pieces, as is the case in an iron tsuba in this collection: here three galloping ponies are carved in the round and spotted with gold inlay.

Though the early Kaga artists are said to have originally migrated from Fushimi and settled in Kanazawa in the early seventeenth century, there is little in the typical work of this school to suggest the rather crude inlays which have been described above. Kaga artists are generally famed for the accuracy of their excellent *hirazōgan*. Undoubtedly they owe much of their refinement in color, design, and workmanship to the influence of Gotō artists, who were at that time creating their famous reliefs in the precious metals, and some of whom were also working in the province of Kaga.<sup>2</sup> The earliest Kaga work is generally accomplished in iron with inlays of *sentoku* or silver, which produce a beautiful

<sup>1</sup> OKABE KAKUYA, *Japanese Sword Guards*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, *Japanese Sword Fittings in the Nauntun Collection*, p. 51.

and brilliant effect. As the influence of the Gotō artists increased, shakudō, shibuichi, and copper were preferred for the ground of the tsuba, in which metals of varying shades were inlaid in a variety of design. A charming characteristic of this work is the combination of inlay and *kebori*. It is quite common to find, especially on kozuka, a design inlaid on the obverse and, on the reverse, a continuation or supplementation of the motive executed in the fine hair-line engraving. "The schools of Kaga were numerous. Early in the seventeenth century, Gotō Kenjō's pupil, Ujiye Godayu founded the Katsuki. Another of Kenjō's pupils started the Kuwamura group; a pupil of Takujō initiated the Kuninaga school; and Yoshihisa, pupil of Yenjō, began the Mizuno family in the Genroku period (1668-1703). Five or six groups of less importance might be mentioned, besides a large number of independent workers."<sup>1</sup> Among the earliest masters, Yoshishige, who used the name Gorosaku, and Kuninaga, who sometimes signed his work Jirosaku, should be pointed out. Both these artists were chisellers and inlay-workers for the daimyō of Kaga, and worked in the first half of the seventeenth century.

In the two unsigned examples of Kaga work reproduced in Plate XI, Figs. 3-4, the ground metal in each case is copper. The tsuba which belongs to the late eighteenth century, is circular with riohitsu plugged with shakudō. Inlaid in flat *hirazōgan* with *kebori* are silver peonies with leaves of shakudō veined in fine lines of gold. At the right on the obverse side is a split bamboo curtain (*sudare*) inlaid in dark silver with bindings of shakudō in which fine thread-like designs are inlaid with gold. Above hangs the tying cord with tassels in silver *zōgan* with *kebori*. On the reverse side of the tsuba the peony motive is continued, with the addition of three flying butterflies in gold and silver.

The kozuka, also of late eighteenth-century workmanship, is a happy combination of inlay and chasing. On the obverse in flatly engraved inlay of gold and silver are a butterfly, dragonfly, grasshopper, and two roaches, while on the reverse side branches of a species of valerian (*ominameshi*) and grasses are engraved in *kebori*.

A peculiar form of incrustation appears in early Kaga work combined with crests. It is called *gomoku-zōgan* (literally, "dirt inlay"). It has been described as representing broken pine-needles or frost-work (*shimofuri*), and consists of scraps of brass wire and filings scattered over the iron field. On the examples belonging to this collection it forms the sole decoration, appearing without the Kaga crests. The *futatsu*

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<sup>1</sup>H. JOLY, *Japanese Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection*, p. 52.





1, GOMOKU-ZÖGAN. 2, SHÖAMI. 3-4, AWA INLAY (pp. 57-59).

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*tomoye* is again the motive chiselled in openwork in the thin iron guard in Plate XII, Fig. 1. Scraps and bits of brass wire are scattered on the edge and a portion of the centre of this tsuba, which is rather an unusual form to be decorated with *gomoku-sōgan*. It was most likely made in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century, long before the Kaga artists had developed their skill in *hirazōgan* of precious metals.

Though the Shōami school was organized in Kyōto in the seventeenth century, work typical of this group of artisans seems to have been done in many different parts of Japan, where later followers set up their own ateliers in their native provinces. The school was founded by Masanori, who produced tsuba in inlay after the manner of Umetada Myōju (p. 68) with whom he is said to have worked. Certain pieces executed in low relief with inlays also bear his name. By many critics Shōami tsuba are considered as inferior to the products of most of the other schools; nevertheless they have made their appeal to many, as may be seen in studying the average collections of sword-fittings.

The designs seem to be the common ones used on tsuba, an individual characteristic, however, being the cloud-like designs usually cut out in these guards. Much of the work resembles that of Fushimi or Yoshirō tsuba, though the designs are more freely drawn and of a wider range. Reliefs sculptured from the iron itself are also frequent. The list of Shōami workers is long; among the outstanding figures are Morikuni, Moritomi, Shigesada, and Dennai. *Shōami Aizu no jū*, "Shōami living in Aizu" (a district of the province of Iwashiro) is the signature incised on a circular iron guard, with three cloud forms chiselled in openwork and decorated with various shells in relief of shakudō and copper (Plate XII, Fig. 2). Water lines are suggested by delicate gold *nunome*,—a process which was used with extreme skill by the following group of artists. There is in this collection an iron tsuba on whose entire surface tendrils and blossoms of the *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*) are carved. It is signed "Shōami Kanenori," an artist hitherto unlisted in the records. The *kiri* design very often appears on Shōami tsuba.

Most of the inlay work designated Awa is done in *nunome* on iron in contrast to the true *hirazōgan* of the Kaga craftsmen. This school is a branch of the Shōami, having been founded by Tansai, in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century. Much of the product of this school is in inlay on openwork designs of trees and boats, two popular and attractive types also consisting of screens or fan forms carved in iron and inlaid with all-over patterns in different shades of gold. Many

Awa tsuba are said to have been made for presentation purposes, in which case they were lavishly decorated, being called "Kenjo" tsuba, a name applied to those made for presentation to the shōgun (see also Kinai School, p. 83). The designs chosen are very often of extreme delicacy; and the accomplishment of the artist, working with iron as a foundation, calls forth real admiration.

The sword-guard and kozuka in Plate XII, Figs. 3-4, are good examples of Awa inlay of eighteenth-century workmanship. An unusual form, the military fan (*gumbai*), has been utilized for this tsuba for a small sword. The edge is rounded; the lower portion presents the short handle, made into the appearance of bamboo, and the upper portion is topped with a tassel skillfully chiselled. The obverse is covered over by clouds inlaid in gold *nunome*. On the right-hand side is a golden sun, while in the left half the crescent moon is inlaid in silver.

Of the many uses of fans in Japan, that of the *gumbai* is among the most important. These war fans were made either of leather bound by an iron rim and affixed by an iron stick running through the centre, or were entirely of iron. They were used by military commanders for the signalling of commands and the enforcing of orders. Among the decorations, the most common one is that of a red sun on a gold ground, combined with a silver moon among clouds of dark blue or black.<sup>1</sup>

The iron kozuka is divided into six panels, three of which are incised with lines bearing traces of silver inlay. The other three are inlaid in delicate gold and silver *nunome* with designs adapted from the Genji Monogatari.<sup>2</sup>

They represent, right to left, the chapters entitled *Kiri tsubo* ("the chamber of *Kiri*"), *Momiji-ga* ("maple fête") and *Ukifune* ("the floating boat"). Accompanying the two last-mentioned are the signs for the chapter headings,—motives which have been used for many decorations, being a combination of a numerical sign and a design relating to the subject matter of the chapter. The Genji symbols appear as crests on the banners of the Minamoto (Genji) family, one of the most powerful

<sup>1</sup> For further details cf. C. SALWEY, Japanese Fans (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. II, p. 30).

<sup>2</sup> The Genji Monogatari, one of the greatest literary productions of Japan, was written about 1004 by Murasaki Shikibu (Plate LIV, Fig. 1). It is a novel consisting of fifty-four chapters, forty-one of which relate the adventures of Prince Genji in a detailed and most interesting manner. The later chapters, which are said to have been added by the daughter of the authoress, chiefly concern a son of Prince Genji's. According to ASTON (*Japanese Literature*, p. 94), the Genji Monogatari is more than a successful novel, it is a prose epic of real life and realistic in the best sense of the word. Seventeen chapters were translated by Suyematsu Kenchō and published in book form (Tōkyō, Maruya, 1881).



houses of Japan from the tenth century until the thirteenth century, Yoshitsune and Yoritomo being its most famous representatives. The Genji crest, carried in battle, is white on a blue banner, and is that symbol which marks the chapter entitled *Hanachiru-sato* ("Villa of the Falling Flowers"). These signs are also used as numerals in one of the *kiki-ko* ("incense-sniffing games"), of which B. H. CHAMBERLAIN<sup>1</sup> has given an account.

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<sup>1</sup>Things Japanese, 5th ed., p. 245.

## VI. THE SIXTEEN MASTERS OF THE GOTŌ SCHOOL AND THEIR FOLLOWERS

The two outstanding names among the artists who made sword-fittings in the sixteenth century are Kaneiye and Gotō Yūjō. The latter was the founder of a school whose extraordinary work for sixteen generations was sought after by many of the leading military men, and whose products to-day are considered as valuable property in the hands of certain Japanese collectors.

The genealogy of the Gotō Shirobei family has been carefully worked out, and the style of the "Sixteen Masters" commented upon in detail by A. MOSLÉ.<sup>1</sup> Only a brief outline of the product of this school can be given here, and that arranged in reference to the examples in this collection.

For the reason that the early masters of the Gotō family worked entirely for the daimyō and the shōgun, very few mounts of undisputed authenticity are to be seen outside Japan, where they have been handed down from generation to generation fitted in exquisite boxes, accompanied by *orikami* (certificates giving the name of the master, the subject of decoration, and the value). The collecting of small fittings of the Gotō family by the nobility became fashionable in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and it was then that certificates identifying unsigned Gotō pieces came into use.<sup>2</sup>

Gotō Yūjō (1435 or 1440-1512) was the originator of chasing in relief as a form of decoration on sword-furniture, which method he applied only to the small fittings. The style which he instituted was followed with more or less accuracy for sixteen generations by the so-called "Sixteen Masters," direct descendants of the main line; and this style was called *iyebori* ("family chasing"). He was probably the first maker of sword-fittings who used the softer metals and alloys. Many of the schools devoted to the decoration of the sword were soon affected; the influence of the Gotō family may readily be traced in a number of groups.

The *nanako* ("fish-roe") ground was brought to perfection by these artists, and from this time on was the accepted surface decoration for

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<sup>1</sup> The Sword Ornaments of the Gotō Shirobei Family (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 188-208).

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, Japanese Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection, p. 22.

the fittings of the swords carried by daimyō on ceremonial occasions. The early Gotō masters had their *nanako* prepared for them by craftsmen who were not as skilled as those of later times. In some cases the original work is characterized by overlapping of the punch strokes, and again the grains are not completely formed, possibly due to a deflection of the cup-shaped tool used to impress the tiny bosses. In later work the grains have a sharper, nipple-shaped appearance. "When it is remembered that the punching tool was guided solely by the hand and eye, and that three or more blows of the mallet had to be struck for every dot, some idea may be formed of the patience and accuracy needed to produce these tiny protuberances in perfectly straight lines at exactly equal intervals and of absolutely uniform size, so that a magnifying-glass can scarcely detect any variation in their order and size. *Nanako* disposed in straight parallel lines has always ranked at the head of this kind of work, but a new style was introduced in 1560 by Matabei, the second representative of the Muneta family. It was obtained by punching the dots in intersecting lines so arranged that the dots fell uniformly into diamond-shaped groups of five each. This was called *go-no-me nanako* because of its resemblance to the disposition of checkers in the Japanese game *go*. A century later (1640) another representative of the Muneta family—Norinao, known in the art world as Doki—invented a new style of *nanako* to which the name *daimyō nanako* was given, doubtless because its special excellence seemed to reserve it for the use of the daimyō only. In this variety the lines of dots alternated with lines of polished ground."<sup>1</sup>

Straight parallel lines and concentric lines of *nanako* appear most frequently as the ground decoration on the fittings made by the early Gotō masters who at first made only *mitokoromono* ("objects of three places"): kogai, kozuka, and menuki. The kozuka which are attributed to Yūjō are found to be, in many cases, reconstructions probably made from ornaments cut from kogai and affixed to a new field. He is not known to have made any fittings save menuki and kogai.

The subjects delineated on these early products are mainly symbolical of strength, for the sword was still a weapon primarily devoted to fighting; it had not yet become the ornament worn to complete the rich costume of later days. The mythical lion, the dragon, the centipede, and familiar historical figures appear on these small fittings. The figures, which are rather heavy in outline, are in many cases of pure gold. The work in gold incrustation of the first four masters was not successful,

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<sup>1</sup> F. BRINKLEY, Japan and China, Vol. VII, p. 239.



for they had not yet perfected the heating and chemical processes used in producing plating.<sup>1</sup>

Flowers and crests wrought in beautiful detail soon appeared on the fittings which from the time of Tokūjō, the fifth master, were made primarily for a smaller sword carried by the daimyō to court functions at Yedo. This weapon (a short wakizashi) is called the *kamishimozashi*, because it was worn with the court dress (*kamishimo*). The scabbard was of black lacquer, and the fittings were of shakudō-nanako adorned with the formal designs above mentioned. For several generations the tsuba on the *kamishimozashi* was either plain nanako adorned with the kiri crest, or the crest of an individual daimyō, or was ornamented along the edge with a dragon and cloud design (Plate XIV, Fig. 1). These last were generally made by nanako artists, and are rarely signed, as Moslé tells us.<sup>2</sup>

The first four Gotō masters, Yujō, Sojō, Joshin, and Kōjō, are renowned for their menuki and kogai. The fifth master Tokūjō was the first Gotō to make fuchikashira, kozuka, and tsuba; and was also the first member of the family to use gold plating with success. He is said to have been court metal-worker for Hideyoshi and living in Kyōto, also executed orders for the imperial court and for the court of the shōgun at Yedo.<sup>3</sup> Yeijō, the sixth master, is said to be the weakest among these early artists. He was succeeded by Kenjō and Sokujō.

The names of the remaining eight masters are as follows:—

Teijō	1603-1673	Yenjō	1720-1784
Renjō	1627-1709	Keijō	1739-1804
Tsūjō	1669-1722	Shinjō	died in 1830 or 1834.
Jujō	1694-1742	Hōjō	died in 1856, leaving no descendant. <sup>4</sup>

In addition to the Sixteen Masters there are innumerable Gotō workers of subsidiary families, some of whom will be mentioned in this chapter, and others who will be commented upon under the respective schools of which they were the founders or members, such as Nagatsune of the Ichinomiya school.

<sup>1</sup>For methods of purifying and coloring gold used by the Gotō, cf. A. MOSLÉ, *Sword Ornaments of the Gotō Shirobei Family* (*Transactions of Japan Soc.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 188-208).

<sup>2</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup>Certain authenticated specimens of the first six masters are described by BRINKLEY (*Japan and China*, Vol. VII, pp. 256-258).

<sup>4</sup>All of the sixteen masters used other names, which may be found in S. HARA (*Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen*).





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Gotō Denjō, though not among the Sixteen Masters, was an artist of prominence, and died in 1712. His signature appears on an interesting tsuba of shakudō which is bounded by a gold rim (Plate XIII, Fig. 1). Following the signature is his *kakihan*, a *parafe* or written seal used by some artists as the sole signature, but more often employed as here in conjunction with the name (see Plate LXI). The design on the tsuba is brought out in high relief of gold, silver, copper, and shakudō set upon a ground of nanako. Beneath an old pine-tree with golden needles stands the Chinese sage, Fung Kan, known in Japan as Bukan Zenji. He is one of the *rishi* or *senmin* (*sien nung*), beings endowed with supernatural powers who enjoy rest for a period after death, being for a time exempt from transmigration. "They are nearly all Taoist or Tao-Buddhistic myths of Chinese invention, but some may be traced to Indian sources, and a few are of native origin."<sup>1</sup> Those most often met with in Japanese art are the human *rishi* who, in order to obtain immortality retire into mountains, where they practice magic powers, and living in the simple garb of the Chinese sage, have time for contemplation. Bukan Zenji is always accompanied by a tiger, here sculptured from the shakudō with stripes of gold hirazōgan.<sup>2</sup> Silver has been effectively inlaid to represent a waterfall toward which Bukan Zenji is turning, and which breaks in curling waves of silver at his feet. The figure with robes of shakudō and gold, and face inlaid in copper, is modelled with that stiffness characteristic of many of the early Gotō workers.

In contrast to this rather crude presentation is the more freely sculptured figure on the tsuba by Renjō, tenth master of the Gotō family, who died in 1709 at the age of eighty-two (Plate XIII, Fig. 2). He is said to have been the first master to take up his residence in Yedo, where he worked for the shōgun, creating new models and imitating a more elaborate style. Life at the shōgun's court under Tokugawa Iyemitsu (1623-51) and his immediate successors was very luxurious. Pure gold was used profusely on sword-fittings, and tsuba for the *daishō* were decorated with all sorts of motives. The subject chosen by Renjō is Nakasaina Sonja (Sanskrit: Nāgasena), one of the Sixteen Rakan (Sanskrit: Arhat), a group of disciples of Ćākyamuni Buddha. Wearing the Buddhist cloak attached at one shoulder, leaving one arm bare, Nāgasena holds aloft his bowl from which he has power to draw

<sup>1</sup> W. ANDERSON, Cat. of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in British Museum, p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> A common subject is the Four Sleepers: Bukan Zenji and the tiger with Kanzan and Jittoku, two younger *rishi*, who are represented on Plate xxix, Fig. 1.



forth water. Delightedly he looks up toward the rising silver stream, while overhead a gnarled pine-tree with tiny cones of copper bends down toward the mountain torrent by which he rests. The tsuba is of *karakane* with a surface decoration imitating stone and known as *ishime*.

Though nanako continued to be the ground preferred by the Gotō, *ishime* was also produced by them, and from this time on is utilized by all the metal-workers. The term *ishime* has come to include not only surfaces reproducing stone, but such treatment as *kashiji* ("pear ground") *ishime*, which gives a surface suggesting pear rind; *hari* ("needle") *ishime*, a surface pricked with a very fine needle-like point; *gama* ("toad") *ishime*, intended to represent the skin of a toad; *tsuya* ("lustrous") *ishime*, produced with a chisel sharpened so that its traces leave a brilliant appearance; *orikuchi* ("broken-tool") *ishime*, a rough surface produced with a jagged tool, and *gozame ishime*, which resembles the plaited surface of a straw mat.<sup>1</sup>

The kozuka reproduced on the plate with the foregoing tsuba (Plate XIII, Fig. 3) is a product of Gotō Mitsuyoshi, also known as Shinjō, the fifteenth master of the Gotō family, who worked in Yedo in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As is often true of both kozuka and kogai, the decorated plate is separate piece, in this case set into a bronze handle, gilded. The plate is of shakudō, with a ground of fine nanako in straight lines. In high relief of shakudō the artist has modelled a tobacco-pipe, with tip and bowl of silver. Around the centre of the stem is wound a rope taper in relief of gold, and nearby are several silver petals of the cherry blossom.

Another kozuka (Fig. 4), also with shakudō-nanako ground, has a masterful little piece of sculpture on the lower part of the narrow field. It was made by Hisakiyo, a member of the Gotō family, who worked in Kanagawa in the province of Kaga in the middle of the eighteenth century. The artist has reproduced one of the Rikishi or Ni-ō ("Two Deva Kings") or temple guardians, seen before the outer gates of Buddhist temples. They are usually colossal and hideous images with ferocious faces and hands outstretched or grasping a mace or *tokko* (vajra, "thunderbolt"). They are nude to the waist, save for a thin strip of drapery which passes over the shoulder. The lower portion of the body is partially draped. One of the pair is represented with tightly compressed lips, and is often painted green; the other with open mouth is usually red in color. They are popularly identified as Nārāyana and Vajrapāṇi. Nārāyana, otherwise known as Puruḥa, is an Indian god,

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<sup>1</sup> F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, pp. 240-241.



who represents a variation of Brahma, the supreme deity as creator of the world. Vajrapāṇi is an incarnation of Śakra Indra, as chief of the Yakshas, who vowed to protect the teaching of Buddha. The thunder bolt (*vajra-kila*) which he holds is said to represent his intention of destroying any one hostile to Buddhism. One may compare the descriptions of the two famous statues of the Ni-ō at the temple of Todaiji.<sup>1</sup> The Ni-ō are not to be confused with the Shi Tenno, "Four Kings of Heaven," who guard the four cardinal points of the world of Mount Sumeru in Indian mythology. They are known in Japan as Bishamonten (Vaiṣṛavana), Jikokuten (Dhṛitarāshtra), Zōchōten (Virūdhaka) and Komokuten (Virūpāksha), and are generally represented as armored knights.<sup>2</sup>

The muscular body of the Ni-ō on this kozuka (Plate XIII, Fig. 4) is in high relief of copper, the flashing eye is inlaid in gold and shakudō. The lower garment, which has cloud designs incised in kebori, is of gold, as are the long streamers which float upward from the shoulders. The hands are cleverly modelled and, though appearing cramped, due to the limitation of the field, express in their position the attitude of menace.

A typical Gotō figure is that to be seen on the unsigned tsuba (Plate XIV, Fig. 2), which is of shakudō and of late eighteenth-century workmanship. The field is interestingly broken into patches of nanako, which suggest clouds and a river bank, and the centre portion is sculptured in a formal presentation of waves with breaking crests in relief of silver. The subject, which is one of the most popular motives in Japanese art, is also the theme of the noted Nō drama, "the Battle of Gojō Bridge." The participants in this combat were Benkei, a boisterous priest, and Yoshitsune (1159-89), the most deeply beloved member of the famous Minamoto family and a brother to Yoritomo, the founder of the shōgunate. This incident occurred when Yoshitsune was but a youth and known by the name Ushiwaka ("Young Ox"). Coming to Gojō bridge one night, he was challenged by one, Benkei, a strong daredevil who, though a wandering priest, had fought with all the passers-by and captured through his skill and strength nine hundred and ninety-nine choice swords. Ushiwaka, it is said, had been trained in fencing by the Tengu, a bird-like spirit, and in his agile movements, leaping from post to rail, he kept the cumbersome Benkei at arms length until he defeated him. Benkei threw down his eight weapons and won

<sup>1</sup>S. TAJIMA, *Selected Relics of Japanese Art*, Vol. II, Plate xviii.

<sup>2</sup>*Op. cit.*, Vol. I, Plates II-IV.

over by admiration, became the faithful retainer of Yoshitsune following him in all of his exploits and battles.

The youthful figure of Yoshitsune, armed with his sword, is here to be seen poised for a moment on the rail of Gojō bridge, which the artist has made in relief of gold. Yoshitsune's garments are of shakudō and gold worked out in great detail, even to the high, black-lacquered clogs (*geta*) which are realistically sculptured in shakudō. Four of Benkei's weapons, an axe, a hammer, a pitchfork, and a long-handled saw, lie upon the ground. On the reverse there is a pine-tree in relief of shakudō with golden needles.

Among the many groups which are offsprings of the Gotō school is that of Nomura, which was founded by Masatoki, a pupil of Tokūjō. He lived in the seventeenth century and worked either in Awa or Yedo. One of the outstanding artists of the Nomura family is Tsu Jimpo (1720-62), a son of Tsujō, the eleventh of the so-called Sixteen Masters. He was a clever craftsman whose work was much imitated during his lifetime and an example of which is among the specimens in this collection. It is a fuchikashira of shakudō with nanako ground, depicting a lioness and four cubs crouching in a cave beneath an old pine-tree. Sculptured entirely in the dark alloy, it is difficult to reproduce by photograph.

Toward the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, a group of masters of the Nomura family concentrated upon the production of menuki, kogai, kozuka, and fuchikashira, no tsuba by them being found. The motives for decoration were mainly plants and flowers, sometimes animals, but never human figures.<sup>1</sup> To this group belonged Nomura Masayoshi, who also used the names Ichiunsai and Kotōji. He was the son of Masahide and lived during the first half of the nineteenth century. He has left many beautiful bits of sculpture, such as the characteristic kozuka of shibuichi (Plate XIV, Fig. 3), whereon are pictured in beautiful detail a thicket of spring flowers: *fukujuso* (*Adonis sibirica*), *omodaka* (*Alisma plantago*), *botan* (*Paeonia moutan*), *hagi* (*Lespedeza*), *kikyo* (*Platycodon grandiflora*), and *suisen* (*Narcissus tazetta*).

The Gotō artists held a very high place in this field of art until swords ceased to be worn. The nineteenth-century master Ichijō and his followers will be dealt with in a subsequent chapter, for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries still hold many other schools whose work must be outlined in detail.

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<sup>1</sup>G. JACOBY, *Japanische Schwertzierathen*, p. 104.



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1-2, TSUBA OF GOTŌ SCHOOL (pp. 62, 63). 3, KOZUKA BY NOMURA MASAYOSHI (p. 66).

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## VII. THE UMETADA FAMILY. THE ITÔ SCHOOL

In the record *Kinko Tanki*,<sup>1</sup> Umetada Shichizaemon Munetoki in 1827 stated that the Umetada family originated at a remote period, certain members being famous swordsmiths in the tenth century. The first artist to make sword-fittings is said to have been Shigeyoshi Hiko-jirō, eighteenth member of the family which was then known as Tachibana. He lived in the fourteenth century, and is reported to have worked for the Ashikaga shōgun, Yoshimasa. An interesting story is told about his successor, Shigemune, who wrote the name Umetada ("many plum-trees field"). It is said that there was a pond on his estate which he wished to fill up; so he conceived the idea of putting an image in the centre, thus giving passers-by a target at which to throw stones. The hole was soon filled, and Shigemune's clever scheme became known to the emperor, who summoned him and ordered him to alter his name to another writing of Umetada ("loyally filled up"). In later years, the writing of the name was again changed, when it was pointed out that this combination of characters could be construed as meaning "bury loyalty" or "loyally buried." The final writing is Umetada which, translated, reads "loyal plum tree."<sup>2</sup>

These three combinations of characters appear on sword-fittings made by the Umetada, and, as though these were not enough, an eighteenth-century artist ingeniously substituted a plum-blossom (*ume*) incised or inlaid before the character *tada*.

Umetada tsuba stand as highly in the eyes of the Japanese as the products of Kaneiye and Nobuiye. Especially is this true of those made by the master craftsman Shigeyoshi II, Myōju, sometimes called Hiko-jirō. He was the son of Shigetaka and lived from 1558 to 1631 in Kyōto. He originated a method of flat inlay of shakudō on fields of copper and brass. He served under Hideyoshi and Hidetsugu, and was succeeded by his adopted son, Shigeyoshi II, who wrote the name with different characters (see Index) and who, on account of the excellence of his work, received the title Hokyō, an honorary appellation meaning "Bridge of the Law," of Buddhistic origin. A younger brother, Iyetaka, succeeded Shigeyoshi II (known as Myōju) and set up a studio in Yedo, where for several generations this family worked.

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<sup>1</sup> A condensed version is given by H. Joly (Japanese Sword Mounts in the Hawshaw Collection, pp. 16-18).

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 17. See Index of Signatures for the various characters.

Naritsugu, an eighteenth-century artist, and Ichiō of the nineteenth century, are among the more recent well-known artists of this group.

Many of the Umetada tsuba are of iron inlaid in gold, silver, or copper, with extraordinarily beautiful effects. Some are chiselled in openwork, others are solid with designs rendered in low relief or in intaglio. The latter method was masterfully practised by Ichiō.

On Plate XV is reproduced a tsuba which, though unsigned, resembles the work of Myōju or one of his close followers. When acquired in Japan, it was accompanied by a series of certificates, *ori-kami*, one of which, of scroll form, details a most interesting story of its history. Owing to the intrinsic value of this tsuba, technical and artistic, this document might be given serious credence. A condensed account made from a translation of the scroll is here inserted.

"This copper inlaid tsuba was made by a tsuba maker at Daisen in the province of Hōki.<sup>1</sup> In his great enthusiasm for the perfection of his art, the maker took a vow neither to eat or sleep for a hundred days while he worked. He died before the vow was fulfilled. His wife in great sorrow determined to finish the tsuba, and, praying at the shrine, had a vision of the god. She finished the tsuba, which is the only one she ever made. The sickles and flute inlaid represent the treasures of the shrine. The birds are messengers of the god, and the hollow represents the pond near the shrine. The tsuba was the valued possession of Tokugawa Iyeyasu, and was given by him to one of his faithful samurai, Nakamura Shirozaemon. It was handed down to a grandson of Shirozaemon's, who, when imprisoned, gave it away."

The description on the scroll accords well with the decoration on the tsuba. On the obverse side flatly inlaid in the copper which has been skillfully molded so as to give the wax-like appearance characteristic of Myōju's work, are two weapons of sickle-shape known as *kusari* ("chain") *kama* ("hoe"). The upper one, with chain missing, is of shakudō with an edge of silver; the lower one is of shakudō with a blade of gold, and is attached by a golden chain to a small rectangular piece. This type of weapon is said to have been used by women in defensive warfare, being flung at the enemy and pulled back by means of the chain which the owner held. LAUFER<sup>2</sup> has given a full description and drawing of a Chinese weapon called the *t'ie lien kia pang*, which

<sup>1</sup>The lofty mountain Daisen or Oyama is believed to be the dwelling place of the Shintō god Onamuji-no-Mikoto. In the fourteenth century there were two hundred and fifty shrines on the mountain. It is not known whether Myōju ever worked in this retreat, which was some distance from Kyōto where he lived.

<sup>2</sup>Chinese Clay Figures, pp. 249, 251.



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TSUBA ATTRIBUTED TO UMETADA MYŌJU (p. 68).

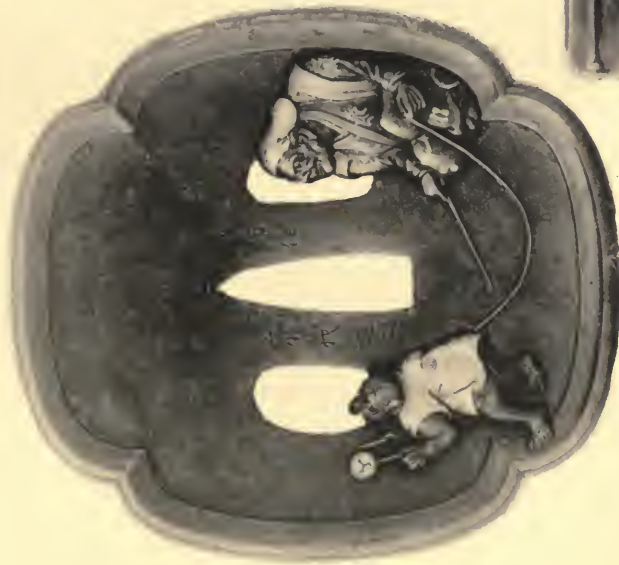
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MOUNTS BY ARTISTS OF UMETADA FAMILY (pp. 69, 70).



closely resembles the object delineated on this Japanese tsuba, although the striking part on the Chinese weapon resembles a sharpened cudgel or flail rather than a scythe. He relates that such a weapon is at present used in Peking in fencing bouts, and that it is there known by the name "threshing flail." A Chinese work is referred to wherein it is said that such weapons were manipulated by women on the walls to resist invaders. The fact that threshing was to a great extent done by the women in China and Japan may be an explanation for the adoption of the flail and sickle as a weapon. In a *surimono* (card of greeting) in this Museum, Kunisada has depicted a famous heroine of the twelfth century, Tomoye Gozen, hurling a *kusari kama* at her approaching enemy.

On the reverse of the tsuba under consideration, on the lower edge, there is a depression which, as we are told by the *orikami*, represents a pond near the shrine. Two flying birds are inlaid above in gold hira-zōgan, and at the right is a shakudō flute with golden stops. This tsuba must have seen service, for it is carefully repaired in two places on the reverse side with plugs of pewter.

The greater number of the Umetada artists worked in iron, leaving the copper grounds with alloyed inlays to Myōju and his immediate followers. The second writing of Umetada "loyally filled up" is the sole inscription on a fuchikashira of iron, which is probably a product of the late seventeenth century (Plate XVI, Fig. 1). On the head-piece two feathered arrows with silver heads are laid crossways and tied together by a golden cord. On the clamp two more arrows of the same form are held in place side by side in a confining brace, also tied with a cord of gold. The heads of the arrows are leaf-shaped, and are skillfully chiselled in openwork with one of the many beautiful designs to be seen on these artistic weapons.<sup>1</sup>

A kozuka (Plate XVI, Fig. 2), entirely of iron and signed "Umetada Narimasa," is covered over with a sculpturing of full blown peonies with fine lines of kebori on the leaves. This artist is not listed by S. Hara, and it is not known when or where he lived. It will be noted, however, that he used the "loyal plum-tree" or third writing of Umetada, and therefore is likely to belong to the eighteenth century.

"Muneyoshi residing at Tōto" (Yedo) is the inscription of an eighteenth-century artist, who used the plum-blossom (*ume*) incised before the character *tada*. He has left an excellent example of his skill in the tsuba in Plate XVI, Fig. 3. It is of brown iron, and is of mōkkō form with a raised rim neatly chiselled. On the edge are patches of the swas-

<sup>1</sup>Cf. E. SCIDMORE, The Japanese Yano Ye (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. VI, pp. 356-373).



tika and key-pattern in gold hirazōgan. On the obverse side at the right and partly covering the opening for the kozuka is the seated figure of an old, but happy monkey-trainer holding in one hand a wand, in the other the cord which guides his pet. His face (in relief of shibuichi), is an interesting and lifelike portrait; his cap is gold. His robe of shakudō, adorned with crests inlaid in silver, copper, and gold, is surmounted by the *kamishimo*, which, during the Tokugawa period, was worn on certain public occasions, not necessarily allied with the court. The monkey, modelled in high relief of shibuichi, wears a golden coat and plays upon a little drum on which the *mitsu-tomoye* is inlaid in silver. The back of the man's head and the tip of the monkey's nose may be seen through the rihitsu on the reverse side, which is plain, save for a stick with a ring handle, which is inlaid in relief of silver and copper. The signature *Ume* (in form a plum-blossom) *tada* is sharply cut on the reverse.

This same fanciful writing of the family name has been skillfully cut on the obverse side of another tsuba of iron (Plate XVI, Fig. 4). It is the only signature on the guard which likely is the product of Ichio, the nineteenth-century representative of this well-known group of metal craftsmen. The ground has been chiselled into a rough appearance suggesting a patch of soil over which realistically sculptured insects move. Two large crickets in high relief of shibuichi, with heads and antennae of gold, approach a cluster of golden eggs jealously presided over by an ant. On the reverse, five more of these insects are inlaid in relief of gold, and several gold and silver eggs are scattered over the ground. The holes for the kozuka and *udenuki* are outlined with gold nunomezōgan; the edge of the tsuba is decorated with the tortoise-shell pattern.

A pupil of Umetada Myōju, by name Masatsugu, in 1600, founded a school which bore his family name Itō. He inaugurated an intricate style of saw-cutting done on iron and shakudō tsuba, a style which is known as *Itō sukashi* ("ornamental openwork") or *Odawara* (name of the village in which he worked) *sukashi*. He is said to have settled in Odawara of Sagami Province, the old capital of the Hōjō regents, but he is also reported to have been a great wanderer; and such would seem to be the case, since similar tsuba with saw-cutting suggestive of his style appeared in many parts of Japan in the eighteenth century. Very often Itō or Odawara tsuba are listed under the heading of Bushū, the province next to Sagami, where several Itō artists worked in the city of Yedo. However, it has been thought well to associate this offshoot of the Umetada family with the parent tree, since almost all of schools in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had representatives in the





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TSUBA OF THE ITŌ SCHOOL (p. 71).

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shōgun's capital, and the work of all might just as logically be designated "Bushū"; that term, however, will be reserved for a limited group who did not have a distinct style.

Masakuni I and II, Masayoshi, and Masatsune, are among the members of the Itō school whose work is much sought after. The last mentioned of these four artists worked for the shōgun up until his death in 1724. Four unsigned pieces have been chosen for reproduction (Plates XVII-XVIII). These admirably illustrate the triumph of this school of artists who sought to produce tsuba which at one and the same time would be guards affording adequate protection, lightness of weight, and beauty of design.

All-over patterns forming a strong network have been utilized for the fields chiselled in two iron tsuba (Plate XVII, Figs. 1 and 2), both of which may be assigned to the eighteenth century. The *shippō tsunagi* ("endless circle of the seven treasures") fills the field of the circular guard, while the same motive more severely formalized is also chiselled within the narrow rim of the mōkō-shaped tsuba. The edge of this latter guard is inlaid with the key pattern in delicate gold hirazōgan. These intricate perforated patterns are marvels of technique, possibly excelled solely by such other Itō works wherein stems of plants or similar designs oftentimes not exceeding  $1/250$  of an inch are cut in the solid iron. W. GOWLAND<sup>1</sup> tells us that "these were produced by a very laborious method of procedure. A minute hole was first drilled in the iron with a fine steel wire moistened with oil and powdered garnets or silicious rock; the hole was then elongated into a slit by means of another fine steel wire used as a saw, also moistened with oil and the above powder. These cuts were further continued with flat wires and were then reduced to the extreme degree of fineness required by hammering both sides of the metal until they were sufficiently closed. The sides of the cuts were kept parallel by rubbing them from time to time with flat wires of steel and grinding powder. Iron guards by the best craftsmen were never cast; they were always of wrought iron."

The water-plantain (*Alisma plantago*) or *omodaka*, a plant utilized as the basis for many decorative patterns, has been cut into the iron tsuba (Plate XVII, Fig. 3) by means of the process described above. Though this specimen ornamented with the slender stems and water lines is of admirable execution, when compared with many of the Itō saw-cuts, it appears coarse and lacking in grace.

That most popular motive, the chrysanthemum (*kiku*), very often

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<sup>1</sup>Metals and Metal Working in Old Japan (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XIII, p. 51).

appears on sword-fittings sometimes inlaid in precious metals, or outlined in gold hirazōgan, or again chiselled in openwork, as is the case on the tsuba of iron (Plate XVIII, Fig. 1), where a blossom of sixty-two petals forms the light guard. The imperial *kiku* crest (*mon*) is of three forms: a single flower of sixteen petals, a double flower with the rounded tips of sixteen under petals appearing between those of the principal series, and a flower of thirty-two petals, an adaptation from the double form. Some experts have interpreted this *mon* as a sun with divergent rays, an evolution from the *hi no maru* ("circle of the red sun") to be seen on the national flag. As the descendant of the Sun Goddess, this would be the logical insignia for the emperor to adopt; however, such forms as this flower of sixty-two petals are undoubtedly representations of the chrysanthemum which is the basis of several crests other than the imperial one.



# VIII. FOREIGN INFLUENCE ILLUSTRATED IN HIRADO, NAMBAN, AND HIZEN TSUBA JAKUSHI AND SÔTEN OF HIKONE

In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century certain sword-fittings began to appear which registered strong traces of foreign influence, both Chinese and European. Two great events in that period, the arrival of the Portuguese in 1542 and the conquest of Korea by Hideyoshi in 1592, brought with them into Japan innovations which rapidly had strong effects on many of the arts and crafts. European characters, in monograms or inscriptions, figures of foreigners, and coats of arms were soon woven into purely Japanese designs in the most ingenious manner; even the Umetada artists combined European letters in some of the decorations on their sword-guards. Grounds simulating leather became very popular both in metal work and lacquer, presumably under Portuguese influence; and, as has already been remarked, inlay in iron noticeably increased with the introduction of European fire-arms.

Two types of sword-fittings grouped under the names Hirado and Namban reflect to a marked degree these foreign currents. In the town of Hirado in Hizen worked a coterie of craftsmen who specialized in brass and iron sword-fittings chased with designs of dragons, waves, and flowers almost always combined with European letters. Those which are signed usually have upon them the names of Kunishige, an artist, who must have been the leading spirit of the group. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Hirado like Nagasaki, became the market-place for many "ready made articles" (*shûremono*), intended for the swords of the merchants and lower samurai, and also to satisfy the demands of the foreigners who might carry them home.

The type of tsuba known as Namban was likewise made by the hundreds and imported to some extent. The word Namban meaning "southern barbarians" was first used by the Chinese to describe all aboriginal tribes inhabiting the southern part of their country.<sup>1</sup> In Japan from the sixteenth century on it designated all foreigners, Portuguese, Hollanders, as well as other Europeans. The word has also been applied to a peculiar kind of hard iron, harder than ordinary iron, but

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Chinese Pottery in the Philippines, pp. 30-32 (Field Museum Publication, Anthr. Series, Vol. XII, No. 1).

not as brittle as steel. It may have been imported from the Malay Islands, Java, or India.<sup>1</sup> At any rate, it was utilized effectively for the production of the early so-called Namban tsuba, the date of which has been fixed by most writers as late sixteenth century. While some of the designs on these guards plainly show European influence, such as figures, Dutch boats, and birds, for the most part Namban tsuba are thoroughly Chinese in impression, and are combinations of intricately chiselled designs of dragons and tendrils with the jewel appearing somewhere in the scheme. Guards of this type, on account of their Chinese character, are quite often called *Kannon* or *Kanton tsuba*. In some cases the design itself is beautifully proportioned and therefore appealing; for the most part, however, the admiration aroused for these tsuba is due to the technique displayed in the skillful undercutting of the tendrils and dragons which are intricately interlaced. The two Namban tsuba on Plate XVIII, while similar in their general effect, have distinguishing characteristics that are of interest. Fig. 2 is round, of iron, with touches of gold nunome and bounded by a plain rim.

The chiselled design is that of two dragons affronté with a round jewel-like object between them at the top of the tsuba. At the base is a formalized presentation of the Chinese character *shou* ("long life"). The dragons are of the five-clawed imperial type, scaled beings with flaming appendages, and they are writhing through a network of scrolls, which possibly represent clouds; the whole design is carved in the round. Of quite a different form are the two dragons in Fig. 3 of Plate XVIII, a tsuba inclined more toward the oval than the round and decorated on the chiselled edge with a pearling which represents the petals of the chrysanthemum. As is often the case with certain Namban tsuba, the seppa dai is of an ornamental form pointed at the top and base. On other tsuba it is squared and covered with a wave design. The dragons in this case are more crudely drawn than those on the circular guard, and have tails of fan shape. They are likewise intertwined with a complicated scroll motive, and are facing a jewel.

This ornamentation of two dragons flying toward a ball or flaming spiral is an ancient and frequent motive in both Chinese and Japanese art. A common explanation in China is the Buddhistic idea of the eager striving of the dragons for the "pearl of perfection," thus identifying the dragon with the Indian *Nāga* and the ball with the precious pearl (*cintāmani*) which grants all desires. In Japan the dragon generally

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<sup>1</sup>H. JOLY, Note sur le fer et le style namban (*Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol. XXXIII).



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1, TSUBA OF THE ITÔ SCHOOL (p. 72). 2-3, NAMBAN TSUBA (p. 74).

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represents the genius of rainfall, as may be seen in the dragon festival on the fifteenth day of the first month, wherein the huge dragon is carried through the streets pursuing a ball which is borne at the head of the procession, and which is the symbol of the thunder that has been belched forth by the creature who apparently seeks to repossess it. M. DE VISSER<sup>1</sup> discusses at length the meaning of the two dragons with open mouths flying toward the jewel, quoting several opinions and citing a certain Chinese picture wherein two dragons face a fiery spiral-shaped ball. Beneath is the title, "A couple of dragons facing the moon." This interpretation he is inclined to favor, since he thinks it reasonable that the dragons, which are the clouds, would wish to swallow the moon, the symbol of fertilizing rain thereby storing up the water with which they later would bless the earth. He adds, "We know the close connection of dragons and pearls in both religions (Buddhism and Taoism). This connection is quite logical; for the masters of the sea are, of course, the possessors and guardians of its treasures. When the clouds approached and covered the moon, the ancient Chinese may have thought that the dragons had seized and swallowed this pearl, more brilliant than all their pearls of the sea." As to the true meaning of the design, whether the "jewel" represents the thunder, the moon, or the pearl, writers are still at variance; the primary interest in this study centers on the fact that this Chinese idea influenced the Namban group of artists for three centuries. The early Namban tsuba are rarely signed, but after the style became popular, scores were made at Kyôto and Nagasaki which have the signatures of mediocre artists.

On account of a certain similarity of technique and quality of iron, the Hizen tsuba are often classed along with the Namban guards, though their predominant decoration is of such individuality as to warrant a distinct grouping. It was in the late eighteenth century that Mitsuhiro of Yagami in Hizen began making sword-fittings of iron chiselled in openwork with a design of a hundred monkeys. He was followed by a son of the same name and by Yoshitsugu, a Nagasaki artist, both of whom improved upon the technique of the founder and added to the family repertoire designs of a hundred horses, a hundred rabbits, and other "hundreds." The tsuba in Plate XIX, Fig. 1, is unsigned, circular, and filled within the slender rim with figures of monkeys carved in all attitudes distinctly different on the two sides of the tsuba. The seppa dai is chased with the formal wave design common to these pieces. A small fuchi in this collection is covered entirely with monkeys (too

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<sup>1</sup> *The Dragon in Japan and China*, pp. 103-108.

minute for reproduction) whose eyes are inlaid in gold. Certain Hizen tsuba are solid plaques inlaid in silver *nunome* with a design of dragons or birds strongly reflective of Chinese influence.

The only port open to foreigners, during the time of the exclusive policy of the Tokugawa shōguns, was that of Nagasaki in Hizen, where the Dutch were allowed to land a limited number of boats, and where imports from China were pouring in, constantly refreshing the stream of inspiration from which the Japanese had so freely partaken. In the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, a certain custom's official of Nagasaki, named Jakushi Kizayemon, was greatly influenced by his association with the people and objects to be seen in this port. He was at first a painter, but is said to have learned from the foreigners the art of etching metals in relief by means of acids, whereupon he transferred his attention from painting to working in metal. He soon became a noted maker of tsuba and applied to the iron grounds which he always used, brilliant designs suggestive of the Chinese artists who had been the source of his inspiration as a painter. These decorations are combinations of relief in iron covered over with very fine *nunome-zōgan* in varying shades of gold and silver. Dragons in the waves, birds flying through clouds, and occasionally figures were depicted by this artist, but it was in the pure landscape that he excelled primarily, introducing, as he did through his tsuba, the detailed stretches of mountain scenery suggested by contemporary paintings from the continent.

The unsigned tsuba (Plate XIX, Figs. 2-3) is thoroughly characteristic of the work of this artist and his followers, and from the excellence of technique is judged to be an authentic product of Jakushi II, who was a son of Jakushi I, and whose work resembles closely that of his father. It is of *mokkō* form, of brown iron, and covered on both sides with a charming landscape in pure Chinese style. On the obverse in relief covered over with delicate *nunome-zōgan* of three shades of gold, rocky promontories tower up into a sky flecked with golden clouds beyond which a full silvery moon emerges. Below, rocks of lesser height and pine-clad, overhang a lake whereon five small sailboats and a larger junk are inlaid in relief of silver and gold. Two tiny figures, in relief of *shakudō*, are walking out on a bank beneath pavilions nestled in the rocks. The scene continues on the reverse side, where another small figure is seen crossing a bridge over the shining waves, and about to enter another rocky retreat.

Jakushi II, also known as Kizayemon, was even more expert than his father in this work of delicate inlay. He was followed by Yeirakudō



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1, TSUBA OF HIZEN (p. 75) AND 2-3, SCHOOL OF JAKUSHI (p. 76).

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TSUBA BY SÔTEN OF HIKONE IN GÔSHÛ (pp. 77, 78).

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of Nagasaki and a host of copyists who imitated with more or less success the style of the two masters.

Another artist, who at first chose Chinese subjects as motives for the decoration of his sword-fittings, was Kitagawa Sôten who lived in Hikone in the province of Gôshû, which is the Sino-Japanese name for Ômi. He not only produced solid tsuba, but also worked in *marubori zôgan*, carving in the round decorated with colored inlay, a combination which became extremely popular, and which is sometimes termed *hikone bori* from the name of the town Hikone. Unfortunately, there was such a demand for this type of tsuba that a wholesale production of signed and unsigned copies of tawdry appearance took place at Aizu in the nineteenth century; and many of these examples have crossed the waters and become the representatives of this school in several collections, thereby falsely prejudicing a number of people against all work of this name.

The genuine products of Sôten I and his son Sôten II, when carefully studied, evoke admiration and interest both on account of their technique and the subjects illustrated. The foundation metal is usually iron, though there is an excellent shakudô tsuba in this collection. At first Chinese subjects seem to have engrossed Sôten I, but later incidents from Japanese history and folk-lore were realistically portrayed bringing out episodes of intense interest. The costumes and armor on the figures are often inlaid with great care and effectiveness, the faces are generally in relief of copper or silver, while the landscape is encrusted with gold nunome-zôgan.

Sôten I, also known as Shûten, lived in the early part of the seventeenth century. He probably used the name Sôheishi and the title Niudô, which originally indicated retirement from worldly affairs to the calm of Buddhistic contemplation.<sup>1</sup> Both of these names were adopted by Sôten II, who is said to have inscribed his name in a larger and bolder manner than his father. The school of Hikone was carried on by certain members of the Nomura family, chief among whom was Kanenori (early eighteenth century), a pupil of Sôten II, who closely followed his master's style.

Two incidents in Japanese history are vividly portrayed on the tsuba (Plate XX, Figs. 1-2), both of which are of iron. The first is signed: "Sôten who lived in Hikone in Gôshû." The scene depicted is that known as Fuji no-makigari ("Hunting at the base of Fuji"), a pastime

<sup>1</sup>H. JOLY, Inscriptions on Japanese Sword Fittings (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XV, p. 88).

of great popularity under the Kamakura shōguns. Above, at the right, may be seen Yoritomo (1147-29), the founder of the shōgunate, riding along on his horse led by two grooms; all are fully armored. A third attendant follows him, bearing the Minamoto field signal (*umajirushi*), a tuft of long streamers surmounted by the family crest, which is a formalized combination of bamboo leaves and three flowers of the gentian (*Gentiana scabra*, *rindo* in Japanese). An armored companion clutching a long halberd with blade of silver, stands barring the path and ready to attack a large wild boar which a hunter is stabbing in the back. The precipitous path is broken by gnarled pines, bamboo shoots, gourd vines, and a rushing stream, all touched with *nunome-zōgan* in different shades of gold. Portions of a camp curtain suggesting an enclosed section of the country may be seen above and below chiselled from the iron and bearing reliefs of silver and gold. On the reverse side of the tsuba, two other armored hunters stand beneath a waterfall, awaiting the attack; one is blowing upon a conch-trumpet.

Dramatic incidents which occurred at the important battle of Dan-no-Ura (A.D. 1185), the decisive victory of the Minamoto over the Taira, are told on both of the sculptured faces of the other tsuba (Plate XX, Figs. 2-3) which is signed: *Niūdō Sōten Sei Sōheishi Hikone jiu Gōshū* ("Niūdō Sōten Sōheshi made [this], living in Hikone of Gōshū"): On the obverse, at the top, is the imperial phoenix-headed boat of the empress dowager Ni-i no ama, who stands holding the seven-year old child-emperor Antoku. Below, she sees her enemy Minamoto Yoshitsune (the young brother of Yoritomo), who has leaped over eight boats, and who is escaping from Noritsune, the Taira warrior. This incident is known as the Hasso tobi ("Eight boat jump"). Noritsune, who endeavored to capture Yoshitsune, was impeded by two wrestlers. Finally, in despair, he jumped into the sea and was drowned. His feet are seen protruding from the waves toward which Yoshitsune is turning. The dowager empress, on seeing the battle lost, prepares to jump into the waves with the young emperor.<sup>1</sup> On the reverse side, four boats are tossing about in the rough and foam-flecked waves. An armored knight may be seen in each of the boats which are effectively inlaid in gold *nunome*. The standards of the Minamoto and the Taira are in evidence, as is also a long narrow banner of the form *fukinagashi*. One is impressed by the fact that these artists undoubtedly deserve a place among the skilled workers in metal, and that they have also left some important historical documents in their carefully conceived designs.

<sup>1</sup> For continuation of Antoku's life under the sea, see M. DE VISSER, *The Dragon in China and Japan*, p. 197.



## IX. HIGO, AKASAKA AND AKAO TSUBA

### KINAI OF ECHIZEN

Although during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, alloys had come into general use, and though the luxurious fashions of the Tokugawa court had called forth lavish decoration even on the fittings for the sword, there were certain groups of artists who continued to work almost entirely in iron, disdaining the softer metals of varying shades. Some of the sword-guards produced by these men are unusually beautiful in the purity of their designs, being for the most part executed in positive or negative silhouette carved with unerring accuracy and in many cases finished with fine lines of surface engraving.

As a group, the members of the schools in the province of Higo were perhaps the most prolific, having left many striking examples of this type of iron work. The fact that this province is far removed from the shōgun's capital may account for a certain persistency in the style of these pieces, as must also the circumstance that they are said to have been made primarily for one family, that of the powerful Hosokawa. For three centuries, this family ruled the province of Higo as daimyō from the time of Prince Hosokawa Sansai Tadaoki (1564-1645), who in his leisure moments is reported to have made sword-fittings.<sup>1</sup> Besides independent groups of artists, there were five schools of metal workers in Higo, each of which developed distinguishing characteristics. Hirata Hiko-zō and Nishigaki Kanshirō were the founders of two schools, and themselves made sword-fittings for the Prince Tadaoki. Each was followed by many pupils and descendants who for several generations carried on their style of chiselling designs in negative silhouette. Two circular tsuba on Plate XXI admirably illustrate the effective use these artists made of cutting away the iron in ornamental designs, such as the cherry-blossom and the spray of wistaria (Fig. 1), and the cherry and chrysanthemum (Fig. 2). Both of these iron guards are characteristic of the work of the Hirata family, who preferred the negative silhouettes in contrast to the positive silhouettes of other Higo artists. One half of the tsuba reproduced in Fig. 2 is carved to represent the chrysanthemum, while the other half is solid and chiselled with a surface decoration of radiating lines common to Higo guards and known by the name *Amida yasurime* or *tagane* ("Amida filing or chiselling"), so called because

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<sup>1</sup>G. JACOBY, Die Schwertzieraten der Provinz Higo, pp. 6-7.

suggestive of the rays of light emanating from the halo of Amida (Amitābha), the Buddha of Endless Light. Straight lines representing rain are also to be seen chiselled as a ground on these particular guards.

The followers of Nishigaki Kanshirō not only made tsuba carved in openwork, somewhat similar to the preceding examples, but they also left solid sword-guards ornamented with designs in low relief and covered with nunome-zōgan. Of such a type is Fig. 3 in Plate XXI, whereon the rain dragon and two rolling clouds are carved in relief and tinged with silver inlay. On the reverse of this guard of irregular mokkō form there are incised, within a ring, five Chinese characters of antique style. A tsuba whose obverse side is very similar to this one is reproduced in the book, referred to above, by G. JACOBY (p. 34), which is an elaboration of the Japanese work *Higo Kinkoroku* of S. NAGAYA. Therein the different workers are listed, their signatures given, and their work commented upon in detail.

We learn from the illustrations reproducing the work of the Shimizu family, the third Higo school, that this particular group specialized in form there are incised, within a ring, five Chinese characters of antique monkey, or standing on a branch looking with searching eye for prey. The octopus placed at the top of the tsuba with its long tentacles extending along the sides is another favorite motive for these artists, most of whom used the name Jingo in conjunction with their other names in signing their work, thereby giving the appellation "Jingo tsuba" to much of the iron work with brass reliefs.

The Kamiyoshi family, who were the early members of the fourth group, had several representatives who produced fine tsuba, the last of fame being Masayasu Rakuju (nineteenth century), who continued the family custom of adorning the iron, wherefrom he cut designs both in negative and positive silhouette, with thread-like spirals or diamond shapes in relief of gold. The Hosokawa crest which consists of one large circle surrounded by eight small ones occasionally appears in miniature inlaid in gold several times on a specimen, thus adding a brilliancy to the dark iron which makes a very rich effect.

Most famous of the five Higo schools is that of the Kasuga masters founded by Hayashi Matashichi (1608-91), whose products for the most part are of deep black iron, though some are known which are of copper, shibuichi, and shakudō. He inlaid pure gold wire on some of his tsuba, thereby producing brilliant effects. The crane with spreading wings and head turned to the side has been the basis for some of the most delicately chiselled tsuba made by these artists. The whole



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TSUBA OF HIGO PROVINCE (pp. 79, 80).

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TSUBA OF HIGO PROVINCE (pp. 81, 82).

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design is cut in positive silhouette, the feathers oftentimes being outlined by spans of iron less than one millimeter in width. With the same power and grace the Kasuga masters chiselled a spray of the plum (Plate XXII, Fig. 1), curving the body of the branch so as to form an irregular rim within which the twigs and blossoms are so placed as to fill the circle with a protective web of beautiful design. Surface carving accentuates the outline of the buds and delicately suggests the stamens of the plum-blossoms.

The same technique is displayed on the following specimen (Plate XXII, Fig. 2), which is likewise a characteristic Kasuga tsuba. Two diagonal lines,—one of considerable breadth, the other very narrow,—boldly cross the lower portion of the guard, while above in realistic carving are leaves and buds of the *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*), that plant which is the foundation of several crest designs, one of which appears in combination with other family insignia in Fig. 3, Plate XXII.

The *kiri mon* is one of the two imperial crests, the other being the *kiku* ("chrysanthemum"). The *kiri* is represented either with five and seven blossoms (*go-shichi no kiri*), which is the imperial form, or with five and three blossoms, generally the form used by other families of Japan. "The imperial *kiri mon* seems to have been of very ancient use, and was conferred as a subsidiary *mon* upon the great Minamoto warrior Yoshiiye (see Plate LII, Fig. 1), perhaps better known by his youthful name of Hachimantaro. Yoshiiye died in 1108, but the badge was transmitted as *kayemon* ('subsidiary badge') to several great military families descended from him, who flourished during the five succeeding centuries. These were the Hatakeyama, the Hosokawa, the Imagawa, the Nitta, the Shiba, and the Yamana, the last-named bearing it as a *jomon* ('fixed badge'). Moreover, seventeen daimyō families of Tokugawa times bore the badge as *kayemon*, and one, the Sō of Tsushima, as *jomon*; besides four *kuge* families, and lastly the great Hideyoshi himself, who bore both imperial *mon*, *Paulownia*, and chrysanthemum, and even presented surcoats bearing them to favored vassals. This should suffice to demonstrate that the presence of the imperial badge on any work of art in no wise implies any connection with the august line of the Son of Heaven."<sup>1</sup>

The three other crests on this tsuba are the *mitsu-tomoye* adopted by Arima, a daimyō of Shimozuke Province; the *hanabishi*, the crest of the samurai family Torio; and the *omodaka* (*Alisma plantago*) in the form

<sup>1</sup> A. KOOP, Construction and Blazonry of Mon (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. IX, p. 296).

used by Mizuno, a daimyō of the province of Kazusa.<sup>1</sup> The maker of this tsuba has chiselled the crests in positive silhouette with kebori lines to bring out details, and placed them equidistant from one another, dividing the spaces by lines of flying birds.

This unsigned tsuba is quite as characteristic of the school known as the Akasaka, as it is of the Kasuga, but it is thought on account of the *kiri* crest which was used by the Hosokawa family of Higo that it is more likely to have been produced in that province. Akasaka tsuba are likewise of iron and for the most part triumphs of chiselling in open-work generally in the positive silhouette style. Some of the most appealing ones are composed of inscriptions written in cursive.<sup>2</sup> This school is said to have originated in the shop of a dealer, named Karigane Hikobei, who lived in the seventeenth century, at first in Kyōto. Under his strict surveillance Tadamasa I, a skilled metal worker, produced tsuba which were suggestive of the Heianjō sukashi guards. Hikobei, being a severe critic and himself a designer, is reported to have destroyed all pieces made in his studio which did not come up to his standard of excellence, thus maintaining a high quality, which has given these tsuba an enviable reputation. The name Akasaka comes from a district in Yedo whither Hikobei moved when the shōgun's capital became the gathering place for many artists. There the dealer founded a distinct school among whose members were Tadamasa I, II, and Masatora as well as five men, by the name of Tadatoki. The first three of these Akasaka masters did not sign their tsuba and worked in the Heianjō style. From Takatoki I on, the artists of this family were strongly influenced by the Kasuga and Nishigaki schools of Higo, using many of the same designs and finishing their work with kebori. They usually cut away the maximum amount of iron, leaving in many cases extremely narrow spans of the metal to outline the motives.

The Sunagawa school was an offshoot of the Akasaka, having been founded by Masatora in the eighteenth century. While the members of this group left many pieces in perforated designs which are pleasing, on the whole, Sunagawa tsuba do not possess the grace and delicacy of the parent school. The same may be said with some reservation of the Akao school, who were greatly influenced by the Akasaka family, and who produced beautiful tsuba, usually of conventionalized design. This school originated in Echizen in the early eighteenth century, and certain

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<sup>1</sup>H. STROHL, *Japanisches Wappenbuch*, pp. 102, 132, 149.

<sup>2</sup>H. JOLY, *Inscriptions on Japanese Sword Fittings* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XV, p. 96).



members remained in that province, while others migrated to Yedo. The small iron tsuba (Plate XXIII, Fig. 1), formed by the crossing of the outspread wings of three geese, is characteristic of the more formalized nature motives which were preferred by the Akao group. Yoshitsugu, a samurai to the daimyō of Echizen, was the first renowned member of this family. He was followed by a son of the same name.

The bamboo, the gourd, and the bean are the designs most frequently met with in the tsuba which were made by an atelier in Satsuma Province. Naoka of the Oda family in the early eighteenth century produced many guards which resemble closely the one in Plate XXIII, Fig. 2, which is unsigned. The artist has carved in the round a gourd with twisting stem, tendrils, and leaves, the veining of which he has brought out by finely cut, low relief and kebori. Certain of these guards, particularly those bearing the signature of Fujiwara Naoka, are fashioned to represent bamboo sprays with young leaves. One of particular beauty is that in the Oeder collection.<sup>1</sup> The Satsuma school excelled in its fine treatment and tempering of the iron, and almost always based its designs upon the three plants mentioned above.

In the province of Echizen, the most famous school of tsuba makers is that of the Kinai, so called from the name of five artists, who made sword-guards of iron chiselled in openwork designs of plants, dragons, shells, masks, and cranes. These tsuba were widely imitated, many of the copies being inlaid in gold, a method of decoration rarely to be seen in the true work of the masters.

The first Kinai of the Ishikawa family died in 1680. F. BRINKLEY<sup>2</sup> relates having seen his tomb, as well as that of the second Kinai which is dated 1699. H. JOLY informs us that "the first and second Kinai made chiefly circular and somewhat large guards, the third affected dragon designs, and his followers continued the tradition, though after the fifth, all kinds of designs prevail."<sup>3</sup> The unusual finish on some Kinai guards is due to a coating of magnetic iron oxide, a process which the copyists also employed. This treatment produced a black patina of considerable brilliancy. Certain Kinai tsuba are signed "Kenjo," which means "made for presentation." These are thought by M. de Tressan to be the work of Kinai II, called Takahashi. Working in the second half of the seventeenth century, he must have produced them for the daimyō, all of whom were required to go to the shōgun's capital each year

<sup>1</sup>P. VAUTIER, *Japanische Stichblätter und Schwertzieraten*, Sammlung G. Oeder, p. 75, No. 627.

<sup>2</sup>F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup>H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 136.

in compliance with the edict announcing this duty, and published by Tokugawa Iyemitsu in 1642.<sup>1</sup> It was customary on these occasions to present the shōgun with gifts. In the attribution of these tsuba to Kinai II, F. Brinkley agrees with M. de Tressan, adding that this artist also produced for the feudal chief of Echizen many other objects, such as *chōjiburo* and incense holders with perforated patterns of lace-like fineness. For exceptional *sukashibori* work in iron the Kinai are unsurpassed by any of the other seventeenth-century artists. Three tsuba signed: *Kinai saku Echizen ju* ("made by Kinai living in Echizen") have been chosen from several in this collection, similarly signed, in the belief that they are genuine examples of one of the five masters. The one in Plate XXIII, Fig. 3, is of black iron, resembling the work of Kinai I, who specialized in large circular guards similar to this one. The design consists of two *kiri* crests placed between scroll-like vines and leaves chiselled à jour within a narrow rim. This example was at one time in the collection of M. Gillot of Paris.

The design of the smaller tsuba (Plate XXIV, Fig. 1), which is also of iron with black patina, must have been one which the Kinai school distinctly favored, since four guards made of masks strongly similar to this one are known to the writer. There is a sparing use of gold on this particular guard effectively employed to inlay the pupils of the eyes. This fact arouses a doubt as to whether it is a work of one of the Kinai masters; however, in studying the excellent chiselling and sensing the realistic reproduction of the Nō masks themselves, one instinctively feels that behind the tools was the hand of a master craftsman. The reverse side is quite as interesting as the obverse. The backs of the masks are cleverly carved and the tying cords issuing from the sculptured ears fall in studied carelessness and knit the separate parts of the design into a perfect unit. The masks represent characters often impersonated in the Nō drama, and reading from the top around by the right side are: Sumiyoshi Otoko ("Sumiyoshi, a young man"), Hannya ("a horned female demon"), Chōrei aku ken ("a long-lived, dumb, seeing ghost"), Jisungami ("ten foot kami"), and Shū bē akui ("eagle-nosed, wicked officer").<sup>2</sup>

The third Kinai tsuba (Plate XXIV, Fig. 2) is a carving of five flying cranes, masterfully distributed so as to make on both sides of the guard a composition full of vitality and grace. The feathers on wings, backs, breasts, and necks are chiselled in *kebori* in differing strokes with

<sup>1</sup>TEI-SAN, Notes sur l'art japonaise, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup>These identifications are in accordance with the book on Nō drama by M. SHOJIRO, Nōgaku Daijiten Fuzu.



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1-2, TSUBA OF AKAO AND SATSUMA (p. 83). 3, TSUBA BY KINAI (p. 84).

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TSUBA BY KINAI OF ECHIZEN (p. 84).



exceeding care and skill, reproducing the soft feather texture to a remarkable degree. The overlapping of the wings on the edge and the skillful curving of the long necks which outline the riohitsu are evidence of that art of design which seems to be a prevailing gift of the Japanese artist.

## X. THE NARA AND HAMANO SCHOOLS IWAMA MASAYOSHI AND HIS FOLLOWERS

With the warring epochs definitely closed under the early Tokugawa shōguns the end of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries witnessed the culmination of the indulgent and luxurious life of the members of the military class. Tales are told of daimyō who, having lost much of their political power, sought satisfaction in the fields of art and poetry, and who, on account of their leisure worshipped richness and adornment to the extent of painting themselves after the fashion of women and matching their decorated swords with the magnificent costumes which were commonly worn in their court ceremonies. Merchants likewise became more prosperous, and many of them took to wearing swords along with their writing outfits (*yatate*) thrust through their belts. Due to these developments, the metal-workers outvied one another to produce sword-fittings of extreme beauty and elegance, and likewise, in order to satisfy the demands of the lower classes, artisans, copying the artists, turned out replicas and *shiiremono* in great number. Though the art of incrustation on gold had been mastered by many of the artists, certain ones, particularly those of the Gotō school, and some of the Nara group, continued to use pure gold in their reliefs. These luxurious excesses were indulged in lavishly until 1830 when due to the low ebb of the state finances, the shōgun's representative in Kyōto, Mizuno Tadakuni Echizen no kami, forbade the further use of any more ornaments of solid gold. To elude this law, those who wished the pure gold are known to have had the ornaments covered with black lacquer.<sup>1</sup> From 1830 to 1840 there occurred a half-hearted return to the old simplicity which later on was followed by an outburst of elaborate decoration.<sup>2</sup>

It was during the century preceding 1830, before the decadence had set in, that the finest work and most artistic tsuba and other fittings of alloys were made by members of the famous Nara school.

This is one of the largest and most widely known groups of metal-workers, whose work is characterized by a large variety of subjects for decoration, as well as the employment of many different metals. Taking their inspiration direct from nature, the early artists worked in iron

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<sup>1</sup> A. MOSLÉ, *The Ornaments of the Gotō Shirobei Family* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. VIII, p. 193).

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, *Japanese Sword Fittings in the Nauntun Collection*, p. xxiv.



with reliefs of gold or silver depicting birds and flowers with striking realism and freedom. Historical and legendary subjects also inspired them occasionally, for they were bold in borrowing from Chinese and Japanese folk-lore pictorial compositions hitherto unused on sword-fittings. The alloys carefully treated became the delight of the later masters of the school who sculptured figures with exceeding skill.

Founded by a seceder from the Gotō, by name Toshiteru of Yedo, in the early seventeenth century, the history of the Nara school is not known in detail in its early years. Toshiteru was followed by Toshimune, who may have been his son. Toshiharu, a third Nara master, who used the names Yechizen and Sōyū, was the son of Toshimune. He and Toshihisa and Yasuchika are sometimes called the *Nara Sambuku tsui*: "three pictures of the Nara family."<sup>1</sup> Toshinaga, son of Toshiharu and the fourth Nara master lived at the end of the seventeenth century and also used the name Chikan. He was followed by two other artists of the same name, who, however, signed it in different characters. Toshinaga Zenzo was a pupil of Toshinaga Chikan and worked in Yedo in the early eighteenth century.

The first of the three great masters of this school was Toshinaga, who is generally known as Toshinaga I and also as Tahei. He was a pupil of Toshiharu, and is noted for his skill in the modelling of figures. He was born in 1667 and lived to be seventy years of age. His son Toshinaga II signed his name identically with his father (see Plate LXI, Fig. I for kakihan). His work, while good, has not the power of the former master.

Next to Toshinaga I, in fame, stands Sugiura Jōi, who was born in 1700 and died in 1761. He worked in Yedo, signing his work Issandō, Nagaharu or Tashichi, and often used the seal characters for his signature, as is the case on two examples in this collection (Plate LXI, Fig. 2). Though a pupil of Toshinaga Zinzō, he has marked characteristics, which easily differentiate his work from the other Nara artists. Carefully treating his surfaces of copper, brass, shakudō, or shibuichi, he usually modelled his figures in *intaglio relievato*, a low sunken relief, which gives the effect of the figure rising out of the metal. He has been greatly imitated, as have most of the Nara masters. A subject which he rendered many times is one of the *Shichifukujin* or seven gods of good luck, Hotei, the genius of contentment and the special friend of children. This household deity was adopted from China, where he is known as the "cloth-bag monk" (Pu-tai Ho-shang). He

<sup>1</sup>F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 276.

is also, though wrongly, identified by the Chinese with Mi-lo Fu (Maitreya), the coming Buddha, and his image is often to be seen set up as guardian of the Buddhist temples. On the copper tsuba (Plate XXV, Fig. 1) with ishime surface, his smiling face appears resting on his crossed arms, as he leans over his huge sack from beneath which crawls a child holding a fan. Though the whole of the sculpture is recessed, and the relief is low, the modelling is of so excellent a quality that the impression is one of high rounded relief. Medallions of various designs are inlaid in gold hirazōgan on the bag, and the name Jōi in seal characters is inlaid in the same manner on the reverse side of the tsuba.

A sword-guard of sentoku, also the work of this master, is signed with his adopted name "Nagaharu," and may be studied from Fig. 2 on Plate XXV. At the right in *intaglio rilievo* is a Mongol riding a small galloping horse and turning to look above into a pine-tree from which depend long, parasitic vines. He has released an arrow from his bow which he still holds aloft, and which is of the type of the composite bow used by the Mongol and Turkish tribes. On the reverse, executed in the same technique, is a surprised and delighted attendant moving forward with outstretched hands to pick up a bird which has been wounded by the arrow. This subject may have been copied from a Chinese painting. The tree is drawn in the style of the Sesshū school which was thoroughly imbued with the Chinese spirit and whose pictures, as well as those of the contemporary schools, were constant sources of inspiration to the metal craftsman. Jōi has masterfully reproduced in these branches and vines, the strokes of the pliant, fully inked brush of the painter, by sculpturing this part of his decoration in what is called *katakiribori*. By this method of chiselling the artist aims to convert his burin into the brush of the painter, and produce by one effort of cutting strokes of varying strength and directness which correspond in significant depth and lightness to the modulated strokes of the painter's brush.

Jōwa, a nephew and pupil of Jōi, was an artist of considerable ability, who copied to a certain degree his master's style, though he produced several fittings which have a characteristic individuality. Using a modified *intaglio rilievo*, he has sculptured an illustration (Plate XXV, Fig. 3) of the popular legend of Tadamori, the twelfth-century hero, who was a faithful supporter of the emperor Toba. It is related that one rainy night he with the emperor perceived what was reported to be a monster with flaming mouth speeding along the road toward the temple



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TSUBA OF EARLY NARA MASTERS (p. 88).

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Yasaka no Yashiro. Tadamori bravely sprang upon the creature with bristling mane, only to discover that it was a faithful old priest who was performing his duty of refilling the temple lamps with oil. Jōwa has inlaid the battered straw rain-hat in gold nunome-zōgan, which against the night-like dark blue shakudō ground of the tsuba gives to the old priest the effect of a halo. Tadamori garbed in court-costume clutches the oil pot and wears upon his face (in low relief of shibuichi) the expression of grim determination which we are told soon turned to apologetic gentleness, when he discovered his mistake. On the reverse boldly sculptured stands the stone lantern beneath driving, slanting rain-strokes; a sprig of bamboo in relief of gold is inlaid at the base of the lantern.

Of equal pictorial quality and technical excellence is the tsuba on Plate XXVI, Figs. 1 and 2, by Tsuneshige, who is but another representative of the large number of skilled artists of the Nara school. He worked in the middle of the eighteenth century and occasionally signed his products with the name Masayoshi (written with characters different from two other Masayoshi of the Nara school, listed by S. Hara). Though a pupil of Shigetsugu, he evidently owes much of his art to Jōi, whose method of low relief he has utilized in carving this tsuba of shibuichi. Shōki, the demon queller, is forcefully portrayed with menacing countenance and sword in hand, as he seeks to capture the mischievous *oni*, which, hiding behind the pine-tree on the reverse side, calls back in defiance to his would-be persecutor. Shōki, one of the most conspicuous figures in Japanese art, is another of the characters adopted from the lore of China, where he is known as Chung K'wei. He is said to have been a ghostly guardian of the emperor Genso, who once in a dream saw the young man seize and eat a demon who was stealing a flute from the emperor's apartment. On awaking, the ruler asked him who he was, and the guardian confessed that he had been a student of the time of Kan no Koso, that he had failed to pass the imperial examinations and had slain himself in humiliation. He was buried with high honors by order of the emperor, and in gratitude his spirit had vowed to expel all demons from the kingdom. In China he is represented as a ragged old man accompanied by the bat, symbolic of happiness; but in Japan he is usually pictured, as here, a large man with flowing beard, wearing official garb and a broad hat or Chinese cap, and carrying a two-edged sword. He is very often the victim of the demons whom he chases, and who secrete themselves out of his

reach, sometimes on tall tree-branches or beneath the bridge over which he is raging.<sup>1</sup>

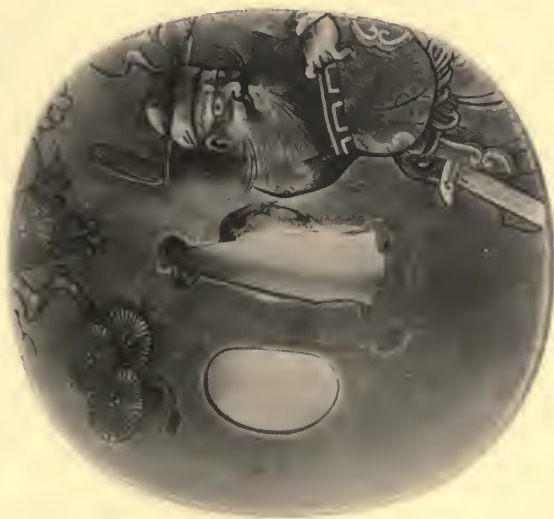
One of the difficulties typical in the study of the artists in metal-work in Japan arises when one encounters the name of Yasuchika, that borne by the artist who in company with Toshinaga I and Jōi forms the famous triumvirate of Nara masters. His family name is Tsuchiya, and he lived from 1669 to 1744, using the signatures of Yasunobu, Tōu, and Yagohachi. He was followed by five artists of varying skill who took the name Yasuchika. His own son (1694-1747) and pupil, Yasuchika II, like his father, produced tsuba with fine decorative effects, excelling the first master in technical skill. These two artists used the same *noms de plume*, as well as inscribing the name Yasuchika in much the same manner. M. DE TRESSAN<sup>2</sup> finds that Yasuchika II writes the character "Yasu" in a more elongated manner than Yasuchika I, and other writers speak of differentiations which help us to distinguish the work of these artists, but, unfortunately, do not tell us what they are. The third Yasuchika signed in cursive. The fourth and fifth, both of whom lived in the early nineteenth century, used many names, all listed by S. Hara. Yasuchika V is represented here by a tsuba, which is signed "Tōunsai," as well as being inscribed "Masachika," which is a name adopted by Yasuchika VI. This occurrence is like adding insult to injury, making the situation truly confusion worse confounded!

Tsuchiya Yasuchika I, in contrast with his contemporaries, who for the most part adorned their fittings with illustrations of historical and legendary subjects, preferred purely decorative designs. Doubtless he was strongly influenced in this choice by the great impressionist painter Ogata Kōrin, who was a contemporary of his master Tatsumasa, and whose purely Japanese nature-studies with their broad, bold designs are very decidedly reflected in the decoration of much of the pottery, lacquer and metal work of this period.

The second Yasuchika, following his father's style with improved technique, is thought to be the creator of the tsuba (Plate XXVII, Fig. 1), which is literally a painting in metal. The ground, a soft gray tone of shibuichi, is slightly chiselled so as to afford a roughened place whereon may cling the ivy vine in relief of two shades of gold and copper. Through an irregular hole a silver snake, whose full length is coiled on the reverse, looks downward toward a large snail bearing its shell upon its back and reaching its tentacles up toward the vine. A

<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY, *Legend in Japanese Art*, p. 322.

<sup>2</sup> L'Évolution de la garde de sabre japonaise (*Bull. de la Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol. XXV, p. 55).



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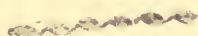
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1-2, TSUBA BY TSUNESHIGE (p. 89). 3, FUCHIKASHIRA BY YASUCHIKA (p. 91).

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small frog is inlaid in relief of gold on the reverse of the tsuba. No conception of the true beauty of the guard can be gained from a black and white reproduction, for the genius of the artist lies in the skillful blending of the copper and shakudō, which has been finished with a rare treatment to produce the slimy body of the snail. The shell likewise is a masterful combination of shibuichi, sentoku, and shakudō, so "mixed" as to defy any detection of joining. This subject might be termed the "survival of the fittest," for the popular interpretation reads, "The snake eats the frog, the frog eats the snail, and the snail poisons the snake." The Japanese call this association *San Sukime* ("the Three Shrinks"), and the children use the names of the three animals in deciding who is to be "it" in a game by simultaneously shouting one of the names, the "fittest" remaining free.

Reverting to the pictorial style, Yasuchika VI chose a favorite subject for the decoration of the tsuba (Plate XXVII, Fig. 2), which he signed "Tsuchiya Masachika (*kakihan*) Tōunsai." On this highly finished shibuichi ground in high relief of shakudō, gold, copper, and silver, the artist has pictured the poet Takamura, a well-known scholar of the ninth century, who rose from poverty to riches while serving as customs house officer for ships trading between Japan and China. His enemies reported him to the emperor as an extortioner and thief, and he was deported to Yasoshima, a group of small islands off the coast. He is said to have composed this song and sung it to the fishing boats as he was being carried off:—

*Wada na hara  
Yasoshima kakete  
Kogi idenu to  
Hito ni wa tsugeyo  
Ama no tsuribune.*

"Oh! fishers in your little boats,  
Quick! tell my men, I pray,  
They'll find me at Yasoshima,  
I'm being rowed away  
Far off across the bay."<sup>1</sup>

The fuchikashira (Plate XXVI, Fig. 3), likewise signed Yasuchika, is the work of one of the nineteenth-century artists of this name. In high relief of shakudō with a flat inlaid decoration depicting a silver moon over golden pine-trees is an *inro* with a cord and netsuke of gold in calabash form. On the clamp a mouse of copper nibbles a paper wrapping (*noshi*) inlaid in relief of gold within which are two silver folding fans. Even to-day, there accompanies all gifts which are presented in Japan, a piece of paper folded to a quiver-like form in which is inserted a strip of stretched and dried haliotis (*awabi*) or a thin strip of gold paper representing the strip of shell fish. Around this flattened

<sup>1</sup> W. PORTER, *A Hundred Verses from Old Japan*, p. 11.

package is tied a red and white paper cord (*mizuhiki*), the whole arrangement being known as *noshi mizuhiki*. In case one is without the materials necessary for carrying out this custom, the donor simply writes *noshi mizuhiki* on a slip of paper and encloses it with the gift. F. BRINKLEY<sup>1</sup> states that the *awabi* has a double meaning, singleness of affection typified by the mollusk's single shell and durability of love and life, since the dried *haliotis* is capable of being stretched (the word *noshi* also means "to stretch"). P. SCHILLER<sup>2</sup> points out the fact that this "gift accompaniment" is symbolic of the ancient custom of presenting to pilgrims on their way to Ise, a gift of dried *haliotis*. Some would interpret the *noshi mizuhiki* as the emblem of humility, recalling to mind the fact that the founders of Japan were fishermen.

Several other specimens of the work of the Nara school are included in this collection, but a mention of the names of the artists who produced them may suffice. Masanaga, a pupil of Toshinaga, the fourth master, has signed an interesting iron tsuba, on which two long armed monkeys hang from vines inlaid in relief of gold. Munetoshi, another pupil of the same artist, has left a landscape executed in relief of various metals on a shakudō ground. Toshiyoshi Garyūken, judging from the ornate style of the large copper tsuba which bears his signature, was one of the nineteenth-century artists of this school.

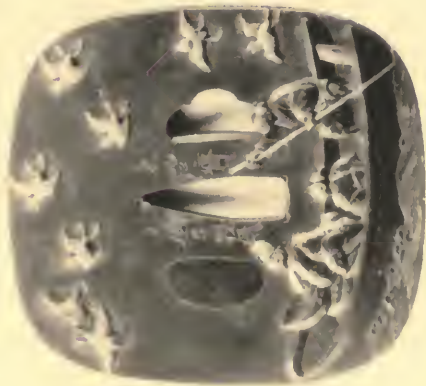
One of the most noted pupils of Toshinaga I was Shōzui or Masayuki (1695-1769), who founded a school known as the Hamano, whose members created some of the finest objects of metal-work, primarily in the form of fittings for the sword. Like those of his master, most of Masayuki's designs are taken from the history and folk-lore of the country, although he and his followers show great originality, as well in the portrayal of nature subjects. He worked in Yedo, using a multitude of names which are listed by S. Hara, the most common being Miboku and Otsuryuken, both of which appear on specimens in this collection.

The two readings of the names of the artists of the Hamano School have caused confusion, which the list below, copied from the Naunton Catalogue, may help to dispel:—

Shōzui	—	Masayuki	Kenzui	—	Nobuyuki
Kuzui	—	Noriyuki	Hozui	—	Toshiyuki
Chokuzui	—	Naoyuki	Kōzui	—	Hiroyuki
Keizui	—	Nagayuki	Rizui	—	Yasuyuki
		Hōzui	—	Kaneyuki	

<sup>1</sup> Japan and China, Vol. VI, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> Japanische Geschenksitten, *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens*, Vol. IX, p. 349.



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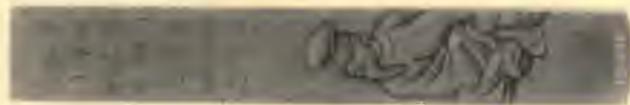
1, Tsuba of Nara School. 2-3, Tsuba of Hamano School (pp. 90-93).







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MOUNTS BY HAMANO ARTISTS (pp. 93, 94).

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Employing a variety of metals, brass, shibuichi, shakudō, copper, and iron, Masayuki sometimes worked in very high relief, and again at times showed the influence of Jōi in his low, recessed reliefs. Both these styles are represented in the two tsuba herein illustrated. The first (Plate XXVII, Fig. 3) is a remarkable piece of modelling. The entire body of this shibuichi guard has been so worked over as to appear wax-like in texture and pliability. In flowing lines the artist has sculptured a rocky retreat above which is floating a silver moon, shedding its light upon the winding stream, also in relief of silver, that reflects a glow by which the scholar Riuto is enabled to read. Being too poor to pay for oil, this Chinese sage was forced to depend upon the heavenly luminary for the pursuance of his studies; although garbed in a robe of apparent richness (of shakudō with patterns inlaid in gold hira-zōgan), the face of the figure is that of the self-denying student.

Fig. 1 in Plate XXVIII reproduces a copper tsuba which is inscribed on the reverse side *Hamano Masayuki*. On the obverse in a more delicate style of chiselling we read: *gyō nen roku ju ichi* ("sixty-one years old"), which places the date of this tsuba in the year 1751. This last inscription was probably added by a hand later than that of Masayuki. The pictorial design is brought out in low relief and kebori with a very sparing use of gold, such as the cap on the figure at the right and the bracelet and eyeball of the demon at the left.

In the preface to the *Kokinshū*, a collection of ancient and modern poetry, completed in the year 922, Ki no Tsurayuki has used the expression that "gods and demons invisible to our eyes are touched with sympathy by poetry."<sup>1</sup> It is the writer's interpretation that Masayuki on this tsuba has taken Kakinomoto Hitomaro, who is known as the saint of Japanese verse, to represent the embodiment of poetry as he leans, with brush in hand, upon his low writing table and genially watches the horned and hairy demon grind his ink for him upon the ink-stone. Both figures are continued in engraving and low relief on the reverse side. This arrangement of design seems to have been a favorite custom with Masayuki, another specimen in this Museum having the fore part of an elephant in high relief on the obverse side of the tsuba, while the form is completed on the reverse.

Another portrait of this eighth-century poet Hitomaro (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2) was drawn by Noriyuki I, a pupil of Masayuki, who signed his specimens *Gaiundō* and *Bōsōken*. He worked in Yedo up until the time of his death in 1787, and on account of his painstaking

<sup>1</sup> W. ASTON, *Japanese Literature*, p. 64.

efforts and skill has left some of the most highly finished products in this branch of art. How perfectly has he testified to the well-known Chinese and Japanese principle that calligraphy is as truly an art as painting, in his exquisite cutting of the poem on this narrow field of only a centimeter's width! The poem is that famous one given in the *Kokinshū* as anonymous, but attributed by critics to both Hitomaro and Takamura. A transcription and translation follows:—

*Honobono to  
Akashi no ura no  
Asagiri ni  
Shima kakure yuku  
Fune wo shi zo omou.*

Dimly  
The coast of Akashi  
In the morning mist  
Concealed in the distance of sea  
Think of the ship.

A more free version would be, "How sad it is, while I am sailing away on the ship, to see the beach of Akashi getting concealed in the dim light of the morning mist!" B. CHAMBERLAIN<sup>1</sup> and A. WALEY<sup>2</sup> have each interpreted the poem, translating the word *shima-gakure* as "island-hid." It is an old expression, meaning "things hidden in the distance of the sea," and not necessarily denoting any island. Noriyuki has evidently preferred to attribute the poem to Hitomaro rather than to Takamura, for he has left in this portrait a typical presentation of the sainted old man.

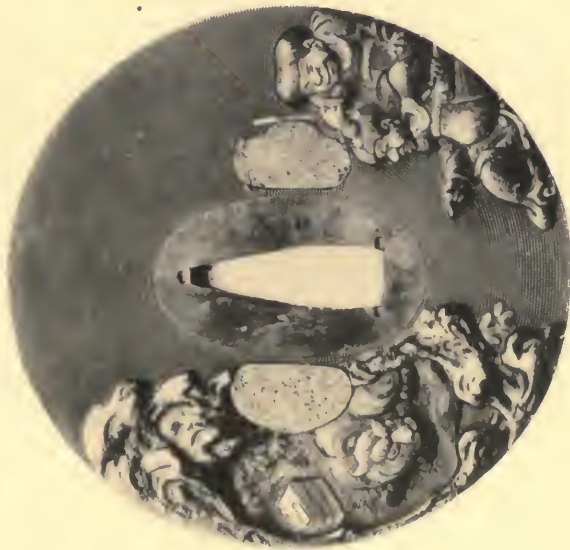
On the shakudō tsuba (Plate XXVIII, Fig. 3), the same artist has depicted with remarkable skill a Mongol standing on the rocks and holding a bow from which he has released a feathered arrow. In relief of copper with hirazōgan of silver, a spotted deer stricken by the shaft tumbles backwards. The costume, quiver, and bow of the hunter are wrought out in fine detail with reliefs of gold, copper, and silver, combining to make colorful effect against the dark background. The pine which is only suggested in *katakiribori* on the obverse is completely chiselled on the opposite side, where it is the dominating note in a simple landscape. The seal of Noriyuki, as inscribed on a small shibuichi tsuba decorated with a portrait of Kwan-Yü and his companions, may be studied in Plate LXI, Fig. 3.

The shakudō-nanako tsuba in Plate XXIX, Fig. 1, is signed: *Miboku Nobuyuki Otsuryūken*, the name of another pupil of Masayuki or Shōzui, who used the *noms de plume* of his master quite freely. The nanako is of exact execution and affords an effective ground for the high reliefs of various metals in which the artist has told the story of Kanzan and Jittoku watching the tiger of Bukan Zenji (p. 63), who

<sup>1</sup> Japanese Poetry, p. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Japanese Poetry, p. 55





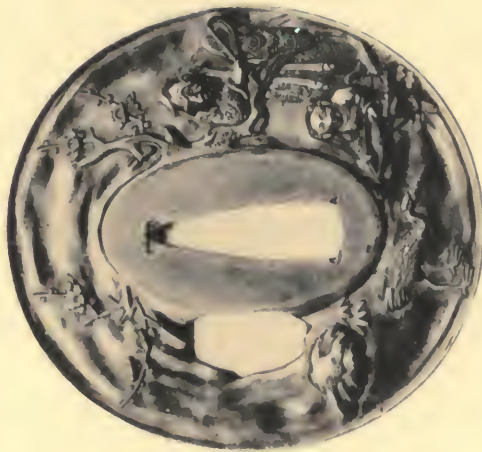
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guards the books of knowledge. These two sages, known in China as Hanshin and Shi Tei, are usually represented as boyish figures with laughing faces furrowed with age. One carries a scroll often blank, signifying the unwritten book of nature. The other is usually seen with a besom, the broom of insight, wisdom, and transcendence, to brush away worry and trouble.<sup>1</sup> Jittoku is said to have been found by Bukan Zenji, who at the time received a divine message, saying that the boy was an incarnation of Buddha. Here their flowing hair of shakudō falls about their faces which are inlaid in relief of copper. Kanzan points towards the crouching tiger whose tense body is modelled in curving stripes of gold and shakudō, and whose golden eyes show a fixed ferocity.

The pair of shakudō menuki (Plate XXIX, Figs 2A and B) is probably the work of Nobuyuki. One is signed with the character "*Mi*," the other with "*Boku*," together reading Miboku, the artist name of Masayuki, which was adopted by a number of his followers. These small pieces are in the form of a cicada (*semi*) with closed wings modelled with great artistry and an intimate knowledge of nature.

Noriyoshi of the Nakazawa family should be mentioned as one of the talented pupils of Masayuki. Through his efforts and those of other eighteenth-century artists, the quality of the work of the Hamano School in the nineteenth century likewise calls forth admiration. A pupil of Noriyoshi, by name Hisanao, is the author of a beautifully executed tsuba of shibuichi on which he has modelled a tiger of shakudō with golden stripes, cowering and glaring up toward a swirling cloud from which a dragon in gold is emerging. It is as though this beast of the heavens had broken through from the reverse of the guard, for on that side of the tsuba the writhing tail is disappearing in the rolling clouds sculptured in high relief from the ground metal. This is a striking presentation of this familiar subject which is the Taoist conception of the eternal struggle between matter and spirit, "the ceaseless conflict of material forces with the infinite—the tiger roaring his incessant challenge to the unknown terror of the spirit."<sup>2</sup>

In the tsuba by Nagayuki (Plate XXIX, Fig. 3) the artist has produced the same remarkable effect of the pliability of the shibuichi, as was evidenced in that first example of Masayuki (Plate XXVII, Fig. 3). This nineteenth-century artist, a pupil of Naoyuki, used the name Kakyusai with which he has signed this tsuba whereon in relief of copper,

<sup>1</sup> M. ANESAKI, *Buddhist Art in its Relation to Buddhist Ideals*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> OKAKURA KAKUZO, *Ideals of the East*, p. 55.

shakudō, and gold, the Chinese sage Rinnasei (Lin Hwo-ching) is leaning over a blossoming plum-tree and watching a young attendant feed a crane.

An interesting ceremony practised during the *Setsu bun* or beginning of the natural year when winter softens into spring is that known as the *tsuina* or *oni yarai* ("demon driving"). At the present day it is performed either by the householder or a professional exorciser of demons, called *yaku otoshi*, who wanders through the streets with his staff (*shakujo*) and small stand (*sambo*) filled with dried peas or beans (*shiro mame*). For a small fee he recites a Buddhist sūtra and scatters the peas into every corner, shouting at the same time, "Demons out, good fortune in" (*Oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi*), thus exorcising all evil influences from the place. According to HEARN,<sup>1</sup> the "peas" are swept up and preserved until the first peal of thunder when they are cooked and eaten, each person eating one more than the number of the years of his age. W. ASTON,<sup>2</sup> on the other hand, in tracing the history of this ceremony, specifies the use of *beans*, which he states were gathered up and wrapped in a paper with a small copper coin which had been rubbed over the body to transfer the ill luck. These were then thrown away, thereby flinging away misfortune.

After the performance of the *oni yarai*, there is stuck up at all entrances a small charm consisting of the head of a dried sardine (*iwashii*) and a branch of holly (see Plate LV, Fig. 1). Of this the demons are said to be afraid, and on that account will not re-enter the house. An incident in this ceremony is eloquently told on the kozuka of shibuichi (Plate XXIX, Fig. 4) by Chikayuki Ihōsai, one of the later Hamano artists, who lived in the first half of the nineteenth century.

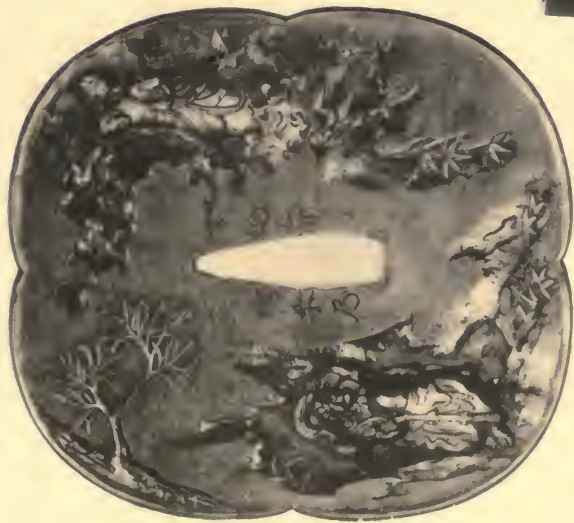
Buddhist subjects were often utilized to decorate the swords in the nineteenth century; and an interesting, quadrilobed tsuba by Masaharu Genshōsai<sup>3</sup> bears upon a dark shibuichi ground carefully sculptured the figures of two interesting deities (Plate XXX, Fig. 1). They are the attendants of Acala, known in Japan as Fudō Mio Ō (Akshara), that deity who is identified with the god of wisdom, Dainichi (Vairocana). At the top, appearing in the softly sculptured clouds in high relief of copper gilt, is Seitaka Dōji, the female deity, who in paintings is usually colored pink and pictured as holding a lotus, as she does in this representation. Below, emerging as from a rocky cavern, stands Kongara

<sup>1</sup> Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan, Vol. II, p. 498.

<sup>2</sup> Shintō, p. 308.

<sup>3</sup> This artist is placed among the Hamano in accordance with the views of H. JOLY rather than among the Tamagawa, according to P. VAUTIER.





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1, TSUBA BY MASAHARU (p. 96). 2-3, MOUNTS BY HATA NOBUYOSHI (p. 97).



Dōji, a male deity of grim aspect, holding a large iron club. His lower garment and floating shoulder draperies are also of gilded copper. He is always painted in a strong red color.

The reverse is carved and inlaid with relief of copper, gold, and silver to represent a giant pine with delicate needles overhanging a silver waterfall. Acala is generally represented as seated near a waterfall with flames surrounding his head. How characteristic of the true artist is this motive on the reverse side of the tsuba in its subtle suggestiveness of the spirit of the main deity whose attendants appear in full sculptured form for those who must see in order to believe! Truly has it been said of the Hamano school that it did not give one inferior artist to Japan.

A separate atelier, though a direct branch of the Hamano school, was that founded and presided over by Iwama Masayoshi Katsuryūken, who was a pupil of Hamano Nobuyuki. On account of his bold, high reliefs which were very realistic, he became a leader in his art in the nineteenth century; he lived between the years 1763 and 1837. His many *noms de plume* are listed by S. HARA.<sup>1</sup> He often imitated the work of Masayuki or Shōzui and sometimes signed the pieces executed after the manner of that master, Shōzui Bo.

Among his many followers is Nobuyuki, his adopted son, who used the name Ichiryūken (for his kakihan, see Plate LXI, Fig. 4). The most famous pupil of Masayoshi was Nobuyoshi of the Hata family, who, in addition to his many other names, often inscribed his work with the honorary title Hōgen ("Eye of the Law"). His technique is excellent and, though at times his work may be over-decorated, it calls forth real admiration. The tsuba (Plate XXX, Fig. 2) combines all of the richness of decoration and treatment which was fast tending toward ornateness in the middle of the nineteenth century when this guard was made. It is inscribed: *Nobuyoshi* (kakihan) *Oite Tojo Shinobugaoka no yu kan, Kaei ni tsuchi no tori sei wa* ("Nobuyoshi of Yedo made this amid the peaceful scenery of Shinobugaoka, in the second [rooster] year of Kaei"; that is, 1849). On the reverse side is his seal in the form of a *koro* (see Plate LXI, Fig. 5). Glyptic skill of a very high quality is evidenced on this tsuba of sentoku, for the clouds and waves are so masterfully sculptured as to seem to have been the creations of a blowing storm which has passed over the molten metal. Golden flecks of foam drip from the curling crests of the waves, while in the soaring clouds inlaid bits of gold in imitation of *nashiji* lacquer accentuate

<sup>1</sup> Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen, p. 80.

the sweeping lines of the sky. Nobuyoshi has left upon this small field a truly noble portrait of Komei (Chu-ko Liang), the great tactician of the Chinese emperor, Chao Lieh Ti, known to the Japanese as Gen-toku (p. 114). He is standing on a wind-swept rock overhanging the waves; and, holding his two-edged sword upright as in dedication, he looks downward toward the stormy sea. In high relief of gold his fluttering garments are blown back from his bared feet, and his long hair and beard are streaming with the wind.

The design on the fuchikashira (Plate XXX, Fig. 3), which is also by Nobuyoshi, is accomplished in a more restrained vein. The ground is a shakudō nanako over which, on the clamp, a scaly serpent in relief of silver moves through a clump of blossoms of the wandering jew (*Commelina, tsuyukusa* in Japanese). On the head-piece a small butterfly in relief of gold flies over the head of a praying mantis, an insect which is often depicted in Japan and China and one much admired on account of its courage and daring. The story as told in a Chinese work of second century B.C. is quoted as follows in LAUFER'S "Jade" (p. 267):

"When the Duke Chang of Tsi (794-731 B.C.) once went a hunting, there was a mantis raising its feet and seizing the wheel of his chariot. He questioned his charioteer as to this insect, who said in reply, 'This is a mantis; it is an insect who knows how to advance, but will never know how to retreat; without measuring its strength, it easily offers resistance. The Duke answered, 'Truly, if it were a man it would be the champion-hero of the Empire.' Then he turned his chariot to dodge it, and this act won him all heroes to go over to his side."

A most appropriate design is this for the decoration of the sword, which though it had by this time developed into an almost purely ornamental weapon, was still the embodiment of the samurai spirit.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Many interesting inscriptions appropriate for the warrior appeared on tsuba and kozuka in this period, as well as on the earlier weapons. These may be studied in the scholarly article by H. Joly, *Inscriptions on Japanese Sword Fittings* (*Transactions of the Japan Soc.*, Vol. XV. pp 86-117).



## XI. THE SCHOOLS OF BUSHŪ AND CHŌSHŪ TETSUGENDŌ ARTISTS

In contrast to the alloyed fittings of the Nara and Hamano schools one sees many tsuba and other fittings of iron, which were likewise made in the shōgun's capital by certain independent artists, who were contemporaries of the groups discussed in the preceding chapter. The work of the Itō masters has already been commented upon, following the account of the Umetada family, for the style of these remarkable specimens of sukashibori was inaugurated by a Umetada pupil. These, as well as Akasaka tsuba, are commonly classed under the name "Bushū," which is the Sino-Japanese reading of Musashi, the province of which Yedo is the main city.

That term has been reserved in this study to include tsuba makers who worked independently, as far as is known, or those who belonged to small groups whose products were not limited to any particular style, but which, on the contrary, though almost always of iron, reflect the influence of several of the larger schools.

These guards are generally signed by the artist's name followed by the inscription "a dweller in Bushū." Such is true of the tsuba (Plate XXXI, Fig. 1), which is signed *Masanori Bushū jū*. On studying the design, one is again reminded of the Chinese landscapes which inspired so many of the metal workers, particularly those in Chōshū Province, as will be seen in the following pages.

This artist, Masanori, is not listed either in the *Sōken Kishō* or in S. Hara's indispensable record of the makers of sword-fittings, but judging from the quality of his work as displayed on this guard, he was a skilled craftsman, as well as a man of deep artistic feeling. Having so treated the iron as to produce a wax-like patina of dark brown, he has chiselled on both sides portions of a landscape in Chinese style which, though in monotone, open up vistas of distinct charm. In the foreground an old gnarled pine clutches with its roots the rocky ground whereon the figure of a man, bent with age and leaning on a staff, is standing, overlooking an abyss. Above and beyond are the inevitable pagoda roofs and the towering mountains with trees hanging from the crevices. Many such landscapes appear on Bushū guards.

While most of the members of the Okada family worked in Chōshū, Masatoyo dwelt in Yedo in the first half of the nineteenth century and

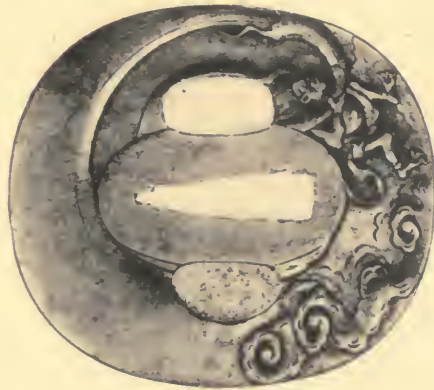
reflected in his sword-fittings the style of his master Masatsune of the Itō family, who sometimes signed his products Jingoro. In low relief with slight touches of gold nunome-zōgan, the artist has depicted a favorite pair of subjects on the tsuba here reproduced (Plate XXXI, Figs. 2-3). On the obverse, at the right, is Fūten or Fūjin (Feng Pe), the wind god of imp-like appearance releasing from his large bag a tempest which turns into rolling clouds at the left. These are continued on the reverse side of the tsuba, where the thunder god, Raiden or Kaminari Sama, leaping through rain and lightning flashes, makes ready with his sticks to strike the resounding thunder drums. Usually eight in number, these drums are decorated with the *mitsu-tomoye* motive and secured to a semi-circular brace which passes behind Raiden's shoulders and over his head. Three of the drums may be distinguished behind the god's body, which is well modelled, and that of a muscular, ferocious demon with fangs.

The names Nobufusa and Yoshifusa, dwellers of Bushū, are inscribed upon two tsuba, each of which is of iron and in the form of an animal. The first artist has modelled a tethered ox in recumbent position, cleverly chased in the round so as to represent on the obverse the front view, while on the reverse the under part of the body and the legs of the animal are sculptured. A standing horse whose bridle lies upon the ground and outlines the lower part of the rim, forms the guard signed by Yoshifusa (Plate XXXII, Fig. 1), an unknown artist, so far as the records go, and one not to be confused with several other artists of this name written with different characters.

Strongly influenced by Sōten of Hikone was one sword-guard maker by name Horiguchi Gorō, who lived in Hashū, but who travelled to Bushū, as we learn from the iron tsuba in this Museum (Plate XXXII, Fig. 2). There is a tsuba in the Naunton collection (No. 975), which is signed "Horiguchi Genjō," evidently the name of another member of the same family. Nothing more can be found regarding these artists. The subject depicted on this guard is the famous encounter between Watanabe and the Oni at Rashōmon gate. This tenth-century hero was the retainer of Minamoto no Yorimitsu, known as Raikō, the warrior who slew the Spider Demon and hosts of ogres and goblins. Thinking that his master had banished all of the demons, Watanabe, on hearing of a creature which appeared at night on the gate of Rashōmon near Kyōto, boastfully wrote out a challenge which he signed with his name and stuck upon the gate post. There at Rashōmon he took his place and awaited the visitor. Watching until late in the night, he fell asleep, but was soon wakened by a tug at his helmet. Thrusting his sword into the



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TSUBA BY BUSHŪ ARTISTS (pp. 99, 100).

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BUSHŪ AND CHŌSHŪ TSUBA (pp. 100, 101).

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dark, he struck something, which, with a terrible shriek, hurried away, leaving behind a large arm. This he carried away and hid in a strong box, never showing it to any one, until one day an old woman, who said she was his nurse, begged to see it. As he opened the box, she turned into a witch, seized the arm and ran off. The artist has chosen that moment when Watanabe awakens and seizes his sword to strike the demon which is above on the gate in relief of copper. Watanabe's determined face is inlaid in the same metal, while the details of his armor are carefully picked out in gold nunome. His frightened horse gallops away on the reverse side, where the storm clouds roll above the wooden gateway.

It does not seem necessary to detail further the products of the Bushū metal-workers; for they are many, and their work, while good in quality and interesting in subject, is not extraordinary. They were strongly influenced in their designs by certain artists in Chōshū Province, on the opposite side of the mainland and much to the south of Yedo. These men modelled some tsuba of unusual beauty. Particularly is this true of those iron guards with black patina which bear upon their chiselled surfaces charming landscapes in Chinese style taken from paintings of the Sesshū and Kanō schools. In this vein did certain members of the Okada family work, one of whom, as we have seen, migrated to Bushū.

Established by Nobumasa at the end of the seventeenth century, the Okada family, for several generations, dwelt in Hagi in Chōshū, having come there from Kyōto. A tsuba by Masatomo, one of the later workers of this group (Plate XXXII, Fig. 3), illustrates the tendencies of this family in the art of metal work. The subject is that of a simple landscape in the foreground of which three horses are grazing in a mountain pass. A fourth, sculptured in the same low relief, gallops along the water's edge on the reverse side of the guard. A tsuba by Nakahara Yukitoshi (1800) is adorned with a landscape in pure Chinese style. The unusual surface of this and other Chōshū examples was brought out by a pickling process which gave to the iron a glowing, black color similar to that of the Satsuma tsuba. Many of the Chōshū workers utilized this method of treating their iron, as is evidenced in certain pieces made by members of the Nakai family who are said to have been chisellers of sword-furniture as early as the fourteenth century.

It was in the seventeenth century, however, that Nakai Nobutsune, the founder of this school in Chōshū, came to Hagi and began to attract attention on account of his excellent work. He was followed by Tomoyuki and Tomotsune who perfected a style of chiselling à jour which

was carried on by many nineteenth-century artists. Among them was Yukimitsu of the Isobe family who used the name Gennojō. From black iron he has skillfully sculptured a tsuba (Plate XXXIII, Fig. 1) in which he has combined a naturalistic design of gourd vines and fruits with the formal crest of two famous families. On either side of the guard there are two *mon* in the form of a double flower of five petals. This crest is that of the Ōta family which was represented by daimyō in the provinces Musashi, Dewa, Tamba, and Yamato, from the early fifteenth century on.<sup>1</sup> The other crest, a circle with two bars, which appears only once on each side of this tsuba, was at one time adopted by the Hosokawa family, but is generally associated with that of the Narita, daimyō under the Tokugawa shōguns. The origin of the design of this crest is interestingly told by T. McCLATCHIE,<sup>2</sup> "The founder of this family, so the tale runs, was once engaged in one of the frequent wars on the eastern marches of Japan, and his provisions having failed, was put to great straits to obtain food,—a battle being imminent at the time. Casting his eyes around, he espied in the mountains a small shrine, and entering this, found laid therein as an offering a bowl of rice and a pair of chopsticks. The pangs of hunger overcame any religious scruples that Narita may have possessed; he seized the bowl and devoured the rice, and refreshed by this timely sustenance, went forth and bore himself gallantly in the fight. In it he earned considerable distinction, and ascribing this to the favor of the deity whose shrine he had invaded, he took for his badge the circle and two lines as a rough delineation of the rice-bowl and chopsticks."

The cherry-blossom seems to have inspired certain Chōshū artists who usually carved it in an informal all-over design with occasional spaces of openwork. Tomohisa of the Yamachi family states on a tsuba in this collection (Plate XXXIII, Fig. 2) that he was a resident of Hagi. He sometimes signed his mounts "Sakunoshin." The guard is in the form of an elongated cross with squared corners, and the iron is of a soft brown texture. Within the narrow, plain rim are full blown cherry-blossoms with stamens tipped with gold relief and tight buds finished with kebori. Tsunenaga records on an iron tsuba that he was a resident of Hagi. Thereon he has carved in the round several blossoms and leaves of the *omodaka* (*Alisma plantago*).

Another design based on a naturalistic motive is treated freely on the tsuba of very black iron inscribed with the signature of Toyoaki

<sup>1</sup>H. STROHL, *Japanisches Wappenbuch*, pp. 134-135; and E. PAPINOT, *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie du Japon*, p. 580.

<sup>2</sup>Japanese Heraldry (*Transactions Asiatic Soc. of Japan*, Vol. V, p. 61).





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CHŌSHŪ TSUBA (pp. 102, 103).

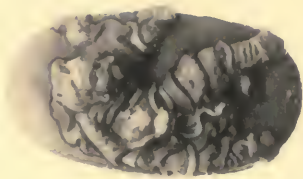




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MOUNTS BY ARTISTS OF TETSUGENDŌ (pp. 103, 104).

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(Plate XXXIII, Fig. 3). This nineteenth-century artist was the son of Tomokata of the Okamoto family. On the reverse of the tsuba is incised *Shukuō hitsu* ("from a painting of Shukuō"). After the manner of some of the Higo guards, this piece is formed by the round carving of a gnarled trunk of the plum-tree with budding and blossoming branches finished with surface engraving and inlays of gold in the centres of the flowers.

Much of the low-relief chasing seen in Chōshū work is lightened with inlay of nunome-zōgan, which may have been due to the influence of Umetada Myōju who was at this time creating his examples of inlay. It more often suggests, however, on account of its broad treatment, the work of the Shōami or even that of Sōten of Hikone. Particularly is this true of the figures which appear on the sword-fittings made by the members of the Tetsugendō school which was founded by Okamoto Naoshige of Chōshū in the eighteenth century. Though he moved to Kyōto where he set up his atelier called Tetsugendō ("Hall of the Iron Principle"), he is always associated with the Chōshū group, since the family Okamoto from which he sprang was one of the most famous in the whole province. Naoshige used the names Toshiyuki and Shōraku, often writing the former in seal characters inlaid in gold. He was followed by a nephew, Naofusa, who, possessed of considerable talent, did not carve the forceful designs which Naoshige sculptured. Hanabusa Itchō, the celebrated painter who died in 1724, is said to have influenced the designs adopted by Naoshige. Though he painted several nature-studies of great beauty, he is particularly famed for his comic drawings, and satirical designs which finally were the cause of his banishment. There are in this collection two *kashira* made of brown wax-like iron, which may have been taken directly from some of this master's drawings. Each is in the form of a mask with crooked nose and wrinkled brow and with the corners of the toothless mouth drawn down (Plate XXXIV, Fig. 1). The skin seems to be that of withered age, and apparently hangs in soft folds. This little sculpture is signed with the seal, in gold, used by the Tetsugendō artists.

The same signature is to be seen on the tsuba (Plate XXXIV, Fig. 2), decorated with a design which was used over and over again on fittings made by this group. This may not be an original work of either Naoshige or Naofusa, for their work was much imitated, and this particular motive seems to have been the common property of all their followers. Whether it is taken from a design of Hanabusa Itchō is not known. We do know, however, that a similar storm-picture, included

among the paintings owned by the British Museum, is attributed to Hanabusa Itchō.<sup>1</sup> On both sides of the tsuba a storm rages, the rain falling in slanting lines, the lightning flashing from out the sweeping clouds and people everywhere hurrying to shelter. Above the thatched roof of the cottage, where four men huddle, may be seen Raiden, the thunder god, with four of his drums decorated with the *mitsu-tomoye*. The faces of the people are inlaid in relief of copper and silver, the lightning is in relief of gold.

Executed in the manner of the Tetsugendō school is the unsigned fuchikashira of iron (Plate XXXIV, Fig. 3). The sculpturing of the brown iron on the fuchi is unusually good. As though done in repoussé, the writhing form of the eight-headed dragon emerges, scattering the golden, foam-flecked waves and angrily looking with flaming eyes beneath shaggy brows toward Suzano-wo who stands on the head-piece. He is a heavy set, bearded figure with one hand thrust forward, the other behind him gripping his weapon ready to sever the eight heads with flaming fangs from the neck of the beast. The details on the hero's armor are outlined in gold relief; his eyes are of gold, in his ear is a ring, and on his forehead, a fillet of the same metal. It is not often that one finds the dragon truthfully portrayed with all eight heads in accordance with the legend as told in the Kojiki (see p. 25). Many similar fittings have the dragon, but only two or three heads are visible. The subject is naturally a most appropriate one with which to adorn the sword, for it will be remembered that after the beheading of the beast, Suzano-wo's sword struck something hard in the tail of the dragon; and on cutting it open, he discovered the great double-edged sword which is one of the three sacred emblems of Japan.

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<sup>1</sup>W. ANDERSON, Cat. of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum, p. 376.



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MOUNTS BY YOKOYA ARTISTS (pp. 105-107).

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## XII. THE YOKOYA SCHOOL AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BRANCHES, THE IWAMOTO, YANAGAWA, SANO AND INAGAWA FAMILIES

Of all the groups of artists who made artistic sword-fittings in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, none won and held a higher reputation than the Yokoya. This school was founded by a pupil of the Gotō family, by name Yokoya Sōyo, an artist whose skill was so keenly appreciated by the shōgun that he was pensioned for life by the generalissimo and came from Kyōto to dwell at the military capital, where he worked until his death in 1690. His products are extremely rare even in Japan, and may be signed by any of the following names: Moritsugu (written in two ways), Morinobu, and Tomokane. He made forceful carvings in relief reflecting the Gotō style, and also is known to have worked in *katakiribori*. Sōyo was followed by four artists of his name, who adopted distinguishing *noms de plume* and different *kakihan*. While many of their tsuba are of admirable quality and execution, they are all overshadowed by the beautiful work of Yokoya Sōmin, known as Tomotsune and Tonan, as well as Chōjiro in early life and Jihei in later years. This artist was an adopted grandson of the founder of the school. He died in 1733 at the age of sixty-four. In contradistinction to Sōyo's exclusive patronage, Sōmin is said to have proudly devoted himself to *machi-bori* ("street carving") or working to general order, though he had inherited the position of chiseler to the Yedo court.<sup>1</sup>

He, like Sōyo, was succeeded by a number of followers and imitators, many of whom boldly used the names of the two great artists in signing work which is obviously inferior either to that of the masters or their devoted pupils. Sōmin remains unexcelled in his chiselling in *katakiribori*, the method of cutting indulged in by Jōi and Sōyo, but never brought to its perfection and full power until Sōmin took up the chisel. A few rare specimens done by him in relief are greatly prized. For subjects, he preferred tigers, mythical lions (*kara-shishi*), flowers, especially the peony, and figures of Hotei, or the demon-queller Shōki.

On a pair of menuki, of diamond shape, one half gold, the other shibuichi (Plate XXXV, Figs. 1A and B), the last mentioned favorite figure with the accompanying demon is masterfully cut in *katakiribori*.

<sup>1</sup>F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 274.

One of the menuki is signed "Sōmin" with kakihan. No trace is there of an after-stroke of the hammer on the chisel to deepen the lines; all seems to have been performed in one unerring effort. The hair and features of the hero are limned with the greatest delicacy, and reproduce, as the artist wished, the light strokes drawn by the painter. The garment is boldly cut in lines of varying depth suggesting the marks of a fully inked brush. It is possible that this design was taken directly from a drawing by Hanabusa Itchō, the master of comic representations referred to in the preceding chapter; for Sōmin is known to have freely borrowed designs both from him and from Kanō Tanyu.<sup>1</sup> Two volumes of great interest are mentioned by M. DE TRESSAN,<sup>2</sup> the *Sōmin zu shiki* and the *Sōyo zu shiki* (designs of Sōmin and Sōyo), which are in the Musée Guimet in Paris. From these one would judge that Sōmin confined himself to the decoration of the smaller fittings, especially the kozuka—a theory in which Wada concurs, but which JOLY does not accept.<sup>3</sup> Certain tsuba signed "Sōmin" are of such extraordinary workmanship that they could hardly have been made by any other than this master.

One should constantly keep in mind, however, that all work signed "Sōyo" and "Sōmin" is not necessarily the product of one of these masters. The school is a large one, including forty or fifty pupils, among whom are four Sōyo and four Sōmin, all of whom followed the style of katakiribori, to a great extent. The tsuba of shibuichi (Plate XXXV, Fig. 2) signed "Sōmin" with kakihan is of particular interest on account of its close resemblance to one in the Naunton collection (Plate LIX, No. 1727). The subject of the design on both guards is the legend of Tadamori and the oil thief (p. 88). Both tsuba are obviously made from the same design. The Naunton specimen is executed in excellent katakiribori, and is ascribed by Joly to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. The example in this collection is thought to be contemporary and, like the former, a product of a pupil or close follower of the master craftsman. The kakihan is the same as that used by Sōmin I.<sup>4</sup> Sōmin III used a distinctly different written seal. The use of gold and silver in high relief reflects the influence of

<sup>1</sup>Kanō Tanyu (1602-74) was the most celebrated artist of his school after Motonobu, first painting in the style of Sesshū, and later becoming a master of impressionism.

<sup>2</sup>LEvolution de la garde de sabre japonaise (*Bull. Soc. Franco-Japonaise*, Vol. XXV, p. 47).

<sup>3</sup>H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 156.

<sup>4</sup>Cf. *Op. cit.*, Plate CXXXVII, No. 720.



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MOUNTS BY IWAMOTO KONKWAN (p. 107).

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the late Nara school. Very little kebori is used, almost all of the design being in relief and inlay. The pine-tree seen here on the left is absent in the Naunton specimen.

Furukawa Genshin, who learned his art from Sōmin, worked entirely in the style of chiselling in line. Mitsusada, on the contrary, preferred relief, as a typical tsuba by him (Plate XXXV, Fig. 3) illustrates. It is of shibuichi with an ishime surface and decorated solely with three well-modelled horses in relief of black shakudō. Mitsusada was a pupil of Sōmin I and lived at Tsu in Ise Province, as he states on the right half of the seppa-dai.

A pupil of Sōyo, Iwamoto Chūbei by name, in the early eighteenth century, organized his own atelier and worked independently with his followers in Yedo. Of these the greatest were the two Ryōkwan and Konkwan Shunshodō, sometimes known as Ryōun or Hakuhōtei. The last-mentioned lived from 1743 to 1801, and left some remarkable portrayals of animals and figures, which have been extensively imitated. Three examples from his chisel may be studied from the illustrations on Plate XXXVI. The kozuka (Fig. 1) is of shakudō with a soft ishime surface. Upon it in relief of copper is a pipe with silver bowl and mouthpiece. At the right is a grasshopper in relief of gold. The back of the kozuka is of gilded metal, as is so often the case with like pieces by Sōmin. The two menuki (Figs. 2A and B) are beautiful bits of sculpture, each in the form of three flying, chirping sparrows, whose natural coloring has been reproduced by combining copper, shakudō, shibuichi, and gold. One is signed "Konkwan," the other is inscribed with the kakihan only.

The influence of the Nara and Hamano schools is reflected in the tsuba of shibuichi, which is charming in design and admirable in execution. The full signature "Iwamoto Konkwan" with kakihan may be studied on the reverse side, which is reproduced along with the photograph of the obverse (Plate XXXVI, Figs. 3 and 4). The design is brought out in low relief with lines of fine kebori and reliefs of gold and copper. Beneath a full moon is a fox (*kitsune*) standing on his hind legs on the bank of a stream. Having put rushes on his head in order to appear as a woman, he gazes contentedly at his reflection in the water. On the reverse side of the tsuba, an old wrinkled farmer with face of copper leans on a staff behind bundles of rice. The narrow, raised path of the rice-field is indicated in lines of katakiribori.

Foxes in Japan exercise a remarkable influence over the lower classes even to-day. The belief in the magic which they are said to

practise came into the country from China about the tenth century, according to B. CHAMBERLAIN<sup>1</sup> and L. HEARN.<sup>2</sup> Each of these authors gives astounding accounts of the demoniacal powers which these animals exercise over certain people, resulting in a malady called fox possession (*kitsune-tsuki*), which, according to these and other stories, causes intense suffering. The greater number of foxes are creatures of evil disposition, given to disguising themselves as women, priests, or animals other than their own kind, and thereby tricking their victims in numberless ways. One fox which is an exception to this category is the creature known as the messenger of Inari, the god of rice. A pair of Inari foxes are always to be seen at the entrance of the temples dedicated to this god, who is a more modern conception of the deity mentioned in the Kojiki, as the August Spirit of Food (Uka no mi tama no mikoto). Not only does the Inari fox represent the protective deity of the fields, he also is enabled to cure minor ailments, such as colds and coughs, and seems to be a special guardian of the courtesan class in certain localities, according to L. HEARN.<sup>3</sup>

The same writer points out the fact that the retainer is now worshipped more generally than the god. "Originally the fox was sacred to Inari only, as the tortoise is still sacred to Kōmpira; the deer to the Great Deity of Kasuga, the rat to Daikoku, the *tai* fish to Ebisu, the white serpent to Benten, or the centipede to Bishamon, god of battles. But in the course of centuries the fox usurped divinity. And the stone images of him are not the only outward evidences of his cult. At the rear of almost every Inari temple you will generally find in the wall of the shrine building, one or two feet above the ground, an aperture about eight inches in diameter and perfectly circular. It is often made so as to be closed at will by a sliding plank. This circular orifice is a fox hole, and if you find one open and look within, you will probably see offerings of *tōfu* or other food which foxes are supposed to be fond of. You will also, most likely, find grains of rice scattered on some little projection of woodwork below or near the hole, or placed on the edge of the hole itself; and you may see some peasant clap his hands before the hole, utter some little prayer, and swallow a grain or two of that rice, in the belief that it will either cure or prevent sickness."<sup>4</sup>

L. Hearn reproduces a most interesting letter from Hideyoshi written to Inari, the rice god, begging for the release of one of his servants,

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<sup>1</sup>Things Japanese, 5th ed., pp. 115-119.

<sup>2</sup>Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan, pp. 317-342.

<sup>3</sup>*Op. cit.*, pp. 313-315.

<sup>4</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 316.

who has been bewitched by a fox. This and other cited incidents show that the worship of Inari by the military class was quite a common practice. All samurai families were believed by the peasants to be the possessors of foxes; and Matsudaira, the daimyō of Izumio Province, was supposed to be the owner of a great number. Stories in that province are still commonly told regarding the power of foxes. There are to be seen in the gardens of almost every old clan (*shizoku*) residence in Matsue a small shrine of Inari Daimyōjin with little stone foxes seated before it.<sup>1</sup> The appearance of the fox on sword-fittings is not at all uncommon, as is illustrated on other specimens on succeeding plates.

Another offshoot from the Yokoya school is that of the Yanagawa which was founded by a pupil of Sōyo I, named Masatsugu, in the early eighteenth century. This school is principally known through the work of Naomasa (1691-1757), who studied under Sōmin and used the names Sōyen and Sōryū. Though most of his sword-fittings are chiselled in relief, he also is known to have used *katakiribori* most effectively. He shows a strong Yokoya influence in his choice of subjects, preferring above all others the peony and *kara-shishi*. These designs are generally inlaid in a medium relief of gold and silver on a nanako ground. Naoharu, a pupil, followed him very closely in his methods and designs, and developed a technical excellence which make his tsuba pieces of rare beauty. Adopted as a son by Naomasa, he continued to work in Yedo, though he concentrated most of his attention and skill on fittings for Yoshida, daimyō of the province of Mikawa. He often signed his pieces "Seiunsha and Onkokwan." The tsuba (Plate XXXVII, Fig. 1) which is inscribed "Yanagawa Naoharu" is of shakudō nanako and adorned with reliefs of copper, silver, and gold, depicting a *kara-shishi* beneath a waterfall near a clump of peony (*botan*).

The most familiar form of lion in Japanese art is that copied from the conventionalized animal introduced into China with Buddhism, not the older and more natural type to be seen on objects of bronze and jade of the Han dynasty.<sup>2</sup> It is called *kara-shishi* ("Chinese lion"), *koma-inu* ("Korean dog"), or dog of Fo (Fo meaning "the Buddha"). With grinning face, a head surrounded by curling locks parted in the middle, and flame-like tail of curls, he is to be seen before Buddhist temples as guardian and symbol of divine protection. Very often he is represented with the peony, an emblem of regal power and king of the plants. This association is known as *botan ni kara-shishi*. Again,

<sup>1</sup>Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup>The development of the lion design is worked out in detail by B. LAUFER (Chinese Pottery of the Han Dynasty, pp. 236-247).



the lion is depicted with a sacred jewel in his mouth, the jewel being a symbol of Buddha. Sometimes he is portrayed near a waterfall or throwing his progeny over a rocky cliff to test the vitality of the young animals. From the days of the early Gotō masters the *kara-shishi* was a favorite subject for sword-fittings.

The fuchikashira (Plate XXXVII, Fig. 2) is the work of Naomitsu, a pupil of Naomasa, who lived to be seventy-six years of age, dying in 1809 in Yedo. Preferring to work in relief, he was evidently attracted by the methods of the Ōmori artists whose sculptured waves are suggested upon each of these small pieces. Over the ground, which is shakudō-nanako, small sanderling (*chidori*) fly over the shining claw-like crests from which silver flecks of foam are flung. The birds are in relief of gold and shibuichi, and are finished with delicate lines of surface carving.

Seiansha is the name inscribed upon the kashira (Plate XXXVII, Fig. 3) of shakudō, which is associated on the same plate with these examples of the Yanagawa family. This name suggests that which was adopted by Naoharu, though it is written with distinctly different characters. What the true name of the artist was who made this piece is not known, but it is my opinion that, if not one of the Yanagawa themselves, he was at least one who came under their influence. The decoration may have a familiar aspect to students of sword-fittings on account of its remarkable resemblance to the design on the well-known kozuka by Haruaki Hōgen, the famous pupil of Yanagawa Naoharu, whose work will be discussed below.<sup>1</sup> Each of these objects is adorned with a most skillful bit of relief in different colors known as *iroye*, ("colored picture"), a combination of alloys whose varying shades and patina are developed under the influence of a pickling solution of boiling acid. On this kashira the main portion of the relief has been executed in repoussé, and is not a separate, complete piece soldered on to the ground.

One of the Shichifukujin,—Fukurokuju, the god of prosperity, happiness, and long life, as his name reads,—has been chosen as the motive of the decoration. He is riding on the emblem of longevity, the crane whose red crest is inlaid in copper. The god, who is said to be a re-incarnation of Lao-tse and again the spirit of the south pole star, the star of longevity,<sup>2</sup> is seated with one hand on his knee, the other

<sup>1</sup> For a reproduction of the kozuka referred to, cf. H. JOLY, Japanese Sword Fittings in the Nauntou Collection, Plate LXVI, No. 2180.

<sup>2</sup> F. DICKENS, Seven Gods of Happiness (*Transactions Asiatic Soc. Japan*, Vol. VIII, p. 461).





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1-3, MOUNTS BY YANAGAWA ARTISTS (p. 109). 4, TSUBA BY SANO NAUYOSHI (p. 111).

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grasping a spray of plum, one of the three plants denoting long life; the others being the pine and bamboo which, with the plum, form the *shōchikubai*. Fukurokuju has a very high forehead which in this case is partly covered by a golden cloth. His wrinkled brow and extremely long eyebrows and beard give him the aspect of an aged man. The tools employed to inlay in gold and silver the brocade pattern on the shakudō robe, must have been of needle-like size and form, for the outline is scarcely the width of a hair.

From the point of view of technique, the artists of the Yanagawa family were unsurpassed. The excellence of their work continued to be upheld by a group which was founded by a pupil of Yanagawa Naonori, named Sano Naoyoshi. Working in Yedo, mainly for the daimyō Akimoto of Kōzuke Province, in the second half of the eighteenth century, he produced sword-fittings both in iron and the alloys, using formal decorations, as well as elaborate ones, sometimes adorned with reliefs of semi-precious stones. The small tsuba (Plate XXXVII, Fig. 4) is a beautiful example of his handicraft. The field is of shibuichi, which has been subjected to a chemical treatment that has produced a soft gray color with a silky patina. The only decoration consists of a sprig of persimmon (*kaki*) inlaid in a relief of dark blue shakudō with leaves lightened by golden veinings. The fruit itself is a rounded carving of deep pink coral. Consistent with this simple elegance, the reverse is plain, save for two leaves in relief of shakudō.

A son, named Naoteru, followed the first artist of the Sano family in the making of fittings of refinement and quality. On Plate XXXVIII, Figs. 1 and 2, there is a pair of tsuba which were chiselled by him, and which were likely made for some daimyō to wear on his *dai-shō* on dress occasions. They are of shakudō with nanako grounds accomplished with extreme exactitude. At the top of each of these tsuba, inlaid in relief of various metals, are the most popular emblems of longevity, the crane and the tortoise. As in China, so in Japan, the crane (*tsuru*) is thought to live to a fabulous age and to be the winged bearer of many of the immortals. One sees the crane constantly appearing on objects of daily use, such as lacquer, pottery, in kakemono, and most significantly in the ceremonial arrangement at New Year's, where it stands with the tortoise at the foot of the *shōchikubai* as a wish for a long life. In the older paintings the crane is colored white with black plumage on back and tail, and with a crimson patch upon its head. Silver has been utilized on this tsuba to represent the delicately chased feathers on the tail and back issuing from the shibuichi

body. A bright red copper inlay on the head completes this representation which is not purely classical, but nevertheless most decorative.

Equally skillful is the sculpturing of the tortoise (*kame*) of the mythological species, known as *minogame* on account of the flowing hairy tail which suggests the rain coat (*mino*) of the peasant. According to tradition, this tortoise of a thousand years of age has the head of a dragon with scales upon its neck and legs. It is one of the four supernatural animals of Chinese mythology, being associated in that country with the tiger, dragon, and phoenix. As an emblem of longevity it is constantly pictured at the side of Fukurokuju and other legendary patriarchs, such as the aged couple of Takasago whose miniature figures typify the spirit of a long and happy married life in the wedding arrangement called *shimadai*.

As in the case of the crane on the larger tsuba the back of the tortoise is to be seen on the reverse side of the smaller guard, where the flowing tail covers the entire upper portion. This long mossy appendage is realistically inlaid in relief of shibuichi of a greenish gray tone; the shell also is shibuichi of a darker shade with delicate inlay of gold nunome-zōgan on the edge. The head and legs are covered with scales so skillfully carved as to appear overlapping and movable.

Before departing from the history of the Yanagawa family, one more group must be mentioned which, like the preceding one, was organized by a Yanagawa pupil. Inagawa Naokatsu lived from 1719 to 1761 and worked in Yedo along with the greater number of metal craftsmen who supplied the daimyō with sword-fittings during their annual visits to the capital. Naokatsu does not seem to have had a large following, Shigekatsu and Yoshikatsu being the names most frequently met with among his pupils. The shibuichi tsuba (Plate XXXVIII, Fig. 3) is signed "Inagawa Shigehisa,"—a name unknown in the records, but evidently that borne by a craftsman of considerable skill. The subject, a Ni-ō, has been met with before (p. 65). In some respects this artist seems to have been influenced by Jōi, for he has sculptured his figure in a recessed relief. Details of the hair are brought out in katakiribori after the Yokoya manner; and the inlaid reliefs, such as the golden eyeballs, reflect the style followed by many of the eighteenth-century artists who were constantly adopting from one another designs and methods of decoration.





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1-2, Tsuba by Sano Naoteru (p. 111). 3, Tsuba by Inagawa Shigehisa (p. 112).

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### XIII. THE ŌMORI AND ISHIGURO SCHOOLS

As the demand for ornamental sword-fittings continued to increase from the middle of the seventeenth century on, there were constantly springing into being new groups of artists who branched off from their parent schools and formed their own clientele. About the year 1700, Ōmori Shirobei, a fencing master in the province of Sagami, began to make fittings for the sword. From whom he learned his art, we do not know, but his son Shigemitsu, known as the first Ōmori master, studied with Masayoshi Ichirobei and Yasuchika of the Nara group. Dying at an early age in 1726, this artist left a limited number of tsuba which, for the most part, are executed in the Nara style.

Terumasa (1704-72), the second well-known member of the Ōmori school, was a grand-nephew of Shigemitsu and studied with Yokoya Sōmin and Yanagawa Naomasa. The reliefs of the latter apparently influenced Terumasa more than the katakiribori of Sōmin. He is not a great artist, and this fact likely explains his choice of the less difficult method of decorating his products.

The greatest artist of the Ōmori family proves to be Terumasa's nephew and adopted son, Teruhide Ittōsai (1729-98), whose excelling skill will be readily recognized if one compares the two tsuba of Teruhide with the guard made by the teacher Terumasa all of which are reproduced on Plate XXXIX. The older master produced excellent nanako, as may be seen on this shakudō tsuba (Fig. 1), but his figures are clumsy, and the whole composition is lacking in balance and grace. The reliefs are quite bizarre, especially the large patch of gilded copper from which the house at the left has been sculptured. Though the costumes on the figures are worked out in detail and the expressive faces in relief of copper are interesting bits of portraiture, the tsuba is not a successful work of art.

The love of the heroic deeds of the brave men of China and Japan, and the universal familiarity of the samurai with these stories, explain their frequent appearance on the mountings of the weapon dearest to the warrior's heart. One of the most popular stories of Chinese history is told by Terumasa on this guard.

Kanshin or Han Sin was the grandson of a prince of Han, and is known as one of the three heroes of Han, being usually associated with Ch'eng Ping and Chang Liang. Through family reverses he was reduced to such poverty that he was compelled to earn his living by fishing in the

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cutting in places to the depth of 2 mm. The entire surface of this tsuba of shibuichi is covered with tumbling crests, overlapping the edges and flinging off drops of golden spray. On either side carefully carved reliefs of corals, fishes, and squid are inlaid in various metals. On the obverse may be identified the "swell-fish" (*Tetrodon*, *fugu* in Japanese) with shakudō back and silver belly; the plaice (*hirame*) is in silver, spotted with inlays of shakudō; and the sea-bream (*tai*), the king of fishes and emblem of good fortune, is chiselled in fine detail from reddish gold.

Teruhide had numerous pupils, but none evolved a more independent style than Terutomo or Hidetomo, who studied with him at the end of the eighteenth century. In certain instances he followed his master closely, often carving from shibuichi a flight of birds above breaking waves in much the same style as his teacher. In the tsuba (Plate XL, Fig. 1) he manifests an unusual genius in depicting animals in a bold and sculpturesque manner. He has so treated the iron of his guard as to produce a patina of soft chocolate brown color. He has carved in the round two galloping ponies with flowing tails; the manes, and eyes inlaid in gold. Here and there over the bodies he has chased small patches of kebori to suggest the soft hair of the animal's coat. Bold, broad cuttings indicate the more pronounced lines of the body, while the coarse hair of tail and mane are chiselled with a flowing freedom.

Quite as admirable from the point of view of technique is the shakudō fuchikashira signed by the same artist (Plate XL, Fig. 2). Reflecting the more formal beauty of the Gotō school, Hidetomo has chosen the plum (*ume*) with its silver blossoms shining star-like against the blue black background and the gnarled trunk of dark green shibuichi. MARY FENOLLOSA has made an eloquent plea that we give to the *ume* its full portion of poetic significance.<sup>1</sup> Countless classic verses of China and Japan, as well as the more modern poems on *surimono*, have told us that the plum is the herald of the new year, the companion of the nightingale, the emblem of long life and good fortune, as it bursts its rose-tipped buds amid the driving snowflakes. While the pine symbolizes longevity, endurance, loyalty, and masculine strength, the plum typifies the feminine virtues of sweetness and chastity.

During the luxurious days of peace under the Tokugawa shōguns, many of the military men in their leisure moments indulged in the pleasures of artistic production, and on many sword-fittings of excellent quality we find the names of certain daimyō and samurai. Teruhide

<sup>1</sup>The Ume or Plum Flower (*Craftsman*, Vol. IX, 1907, pp. 405-421).

had as a pupil a retainer of the daimyō of Mito, by name Hisanori, who was a renowned dilettante, living in the second half of the eighteenth century in Yedo. He possessed considerable skill and artistic feeling, as is evidenced on two fuchikashira of shakudō in this collection. One which is reproduced on Plate XL, Fig. 3, is interesting both on account of its technique and originality of design. In relief of gold, shibuichi, and a little copper, there stands on the clamp a sculptured peacock (*ku-jaku*) boldly raising his crested head above the rim of the clamp. On the head-piece the companion peahen is inlaid in the same metals which reproduce to a considerable degree the gorgeous natural colorings of the fowls. Except in early Buddhistic sculpture and paintings, where the peacock is represented as the heavenly mount of Māyā, mother of Buddha, or occasionally in later work accompanying the goddess Benten, this bird has no particular significance, and is pictured primarily on account of its adaptability to a richness of decoration.

Another samurai who made sword-fittings was Tomomasa, the retainer of the daimyō of Miyatsu in the province of Tango. He worked under Hidetomo in the early nineteenth century. The tsuba in this collection reflects his master's preference for the sterner medium, being as it is an iron guard simply adorned with a silver heron standing on a weather-worn bridge-post.

In the early nineteenth century the Ōmori family had a worthy representative in the artist Mitsutoki, who had received his training under Terumitsu, a pupil of Teruhide. He is the maker of the shibuichi tsuba (Plate XL, Fig. 4). Using a pickling process to produce a light green patina, he has effectively inlaid in relief of shibuichi and gold, tall sprays of the bamboo around which sparrows in relief of copper are flying.

The bamboo (*take* or *chiku*), being evergreen, is used in conjunction with the pine and plum in the *shōchikubai*, where it is emblematic of longevity. In combination with the pair of pine-trees at the door (*kado matsu*), on New Year's day, it has this same significance. It is commonly called the symbol of uprightness. Through one of those humorous quirks of the oriental mind, ever loving a double meaning, the bamboo has come to stand for constancy and fidelity, since there are two Chinese characters each of which is pronounced *setsu*; one meaning "constancy"; the other, the "node" or "joint of the bamboo." The bamboo pressed to earth with the load of snow is also significant of constancy and endurance, as is illustrated by the well-known proverb, "The snow-covered bamboo bends, but never breaks" (*take ni yuki ore nashi*).



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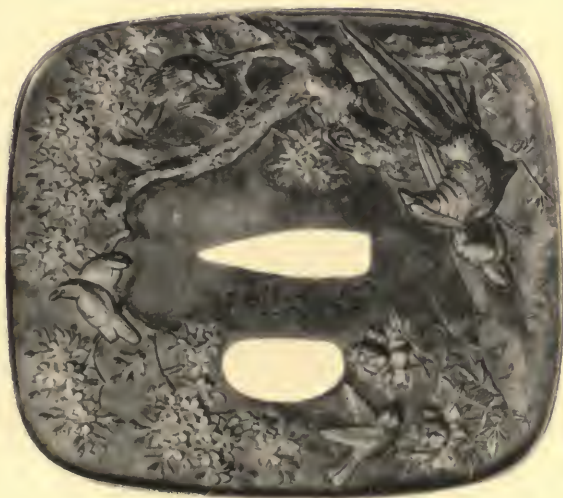


MOUNTS BY PUPILS OF ŌMORI TERUHIDE (pp. 115-117).

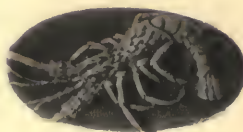
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MOUNTS BY ISHIGURO ARTISTS (pp. 117-120).

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The association of the sparrow and the bamboo (*take ni suzume*), the motive of the decoration on Mitsutoki's tsuba, is a common one, and is symbolic of gentleness and friendship, since the bird seeks out this plant whose graceful branches yield to its weight.

In the study of eighteenth and nineteenth-century examples of sword-fittings one is inclined to be carried away by his delight in the pictorial appeal of the products rather than by the artistry evidenced in the working of the metals. The fittings made by the members of the Ishiguro school, which was founded by Masatsune Togakushi or Jukokusai (1759-1828), a pupil of Katō Naotsune, of the Yanagawa school, are generally such decorative pieces that the technical excellence is apt to be disregarded or rather taken for granted, as one concentrates his attention upon the meaning of the design. The tsuba and other ornaments made by these artists are typical of the elegance of the samurai of the early nineteenth century who, living in peace and luxury, delighted in the products of these masters whose work has been compared quite deservedly with that of the world's famous jewelers. Some of the bird and flower decorations for which they showed a marked preference are marvels of *iroye* work.

The tsuba of shibuichi by Masayoshi (Plate XLI, Fig. 1) is as vibrant and subtle in color as though the artist has been working with a painter's palette and pliant brush rather than with the stubborn and forbidding mediums of metal and chisel. This early nineteenth-century master who studied under Naoyoshi of the Sano school and Masatsune I of the Ishiguro family, has reproduced on this small field, with technical perfection, a picture glowing with the color and beauty of spring in its exuberance. The fully blown cherry-blossoms are sculptured in silver and gold with tiny golden stamens. The leaves of green shibuichi and a light greenish gold are notched and veined with a fine delicacy of touch. Clinging to the branches of the tree and hovering over the silver peonies are birds in relief of gold of different shades with breasts inlaid in copper. The "painting" of the pheasants' feathers is the most skillful bit of glyptic art on this wholly admirable piece. The crests and necks are for the most part of gold, the breasts are of copper flecked with gold, and the tail-feathers are of shakudō spotted with flatly inlaid touches of copper. The reverse is quite as beautiful as the obverse, being adorned with a graceful arrangement of flowering Hibiscus (*fusoka*) and Lespedeza (*hagi*), over which three birds and a butterfly are winging.

The first Masatsune (1759-1828), unfortunately, is not represented

in this collection. His designs were generally based on flower and bird motives, though he sometimes depicted human figures. His son Masatsune II, known also as Masamori Moritsune and Juchō, has left some excellent examples of sculpturing, oftentimes using the lobster (*ebi*) as a theme of decoration. On the shakudō fuchikashira (Plate XLI, Fig.2) made by him, in high relief of gold, there is on the headpiece a large spiny lobster with bead-like eyes of shakudō. In this case it is evidently a part of the New Year's decoration, more of which appears on the accompanying clamp. On account of its bent back, the *ebi* has been adopted as the symbol for extreme old age, and therefore makes an appropriate appearance as a wish for long life on the small stand (*sambo*) which holds the New Year's arrangement to be seen in almost all Japanese houses even to-day on this important occasion.<sup>1</sup> Occasionally the lobster is attached to the straw rope (*shimenawa*), which is stretched before the entrance at the front of the house to remain during the celebration of this festival. Smaller *shimenawa* may be seen over inner doorways. The origin of this custom is thought to reach back to the mythological days recounted in the Kojiki when Amaterasu, the Sun Goddess, being tempted forth from the cave into which she had retired, was prevented from returning therein by the deity Futo tama no mikoto, who stretched the rope made of twisted straw across the opening of the retreat.<sup>2</sup> The *shimenawa* is faithfully portrayed here in relief of gold, silver, and shibuichi. It is always made of straw twisted to the left (the pure or fortunate side) with pendant straws at regular intervals, but of differing numbers in the order, three, five, seven, three, five, seven, along the whole length of the strand. Alternating with these pendants are the paper cuttings known as *gohei*, strips of paper representing offerings of cloth in ancient times to the gods.<sup>3</sup> Beside the *gohei* there are leaves of the fern (*Polypodium dicotomon*) known as *moromoki* or *urajiro* in Japan. Since the fronds spring in pairs from the stem, this plant is symbolic of happy married life and increase. The small oval leaf which is often seen attached to the *shimenawa* is that of

<sup>1</sup>For a full enumeration and explanation of the objects making up the *sambo* arrangement, cf. L. HEARN, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, Vol. II, p. 497.

<sup>2</sup>B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Kojiki*, p. 59. At Futami on the Owari Bay there are two rocks known as the Myōto seki ("Wife and Husband Rocks") from which is suspended a *shimenawa* said by some to represent the bond of conjugal union, by others to be a protection against the entrance of the Plague God. The fact, however, that to this day journeys are made to this place on New Year's morning before dawn in order to see the sun rise between the two rocks, thereby welcoming Amaterasu's return to the earth, points to a distinct survival in pure form of the legend referred to above, which in turn may be a primitive explanation of a solar eclipse that occurred in the early days of Japan's history.

<sup>3</sup>*Op. cit.*, p. 57.



the *Daphniphillum macropodum*, known as *yuzuruha*, whose old leaves remain after the young ones have sprouted, happily adopted in this connection as the emblem of a long united family.<sup>1</sup>

These objects referring to popular festivals commonly appear on the sword-fittings of the peaceful Tokuwaga period, for since the sword was seldom used in organized fighting, every decorative motive was utilized to adorn its mounts and thereby add to the elegant costume worn by the daimyō and their retainers.

As has been observed before, Buddhist subjects were not uncommon. A beautifully modelled figure of one of the most popular deities in Japan decorates the tsuba (Plate XLI, Fig. 3), which is the work of another pupil of Masatsune I. Masahiro, who excelled in the modelling of figures, signed his fittings with the following adopted names: Gantōshi, Keiho, Koryūsha, Kakujusai, and Katsutoshi. The two last-mentioned are incised upon this guard of shibuichi on which he has demonstrated the high quality of his work. As though stirring the molten metal, the artist has sculptured, across the upper portion of the tsuba, lightly rolling clouds. At the right, seated on a rock, dotted with golden bamboo sprouts, is the divinity whose worship in Japan almost outrivals that of Amida. The Bodhisattva Kwan-non or Kwan-yin, in Sanskrit Avalokiteśvara, is known as the goddess of mercy, being represented in many forms, eight of which are quite common.<sup>2</sup> In this representation the deity is contemplating a leafless branch of willow set up in a holy-water bottle inlaid in relief of gold and poised on a rock carved from shakudō. The figure which is full of grace and repose stands out in high relief against a halo inlaid in flecks of gold imitating *nashiji* lacquer. The calm face is in relief of silver, the flowing hair, almost hidden by the golden head and shoulder drape, is sculptured from shakudō, and under the magnifying glass proves to be worked out in fine detail with kebori lines. A gold necklace with three pendants adorns the bare breast. On the reverse, beneath rolling clouds, a waterfall inlaid in silver breaks into curling waves over a rugged rock of shakudō.

Though said to be the spiritual son of Amida, Kwan-non is generally represented as this gentle feminine figure. "This incongruity is probably explained by the theories advanced by the Chinese that Kwan-yin is of native origin, and was originally the daughter of a king of the Chou

<sup>1</sup> Very often other objects of equally interesting significance are added to the *shimenawa*. For details, see L. HEARN, *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*, Vol. II, p. 496 and F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VI, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> W. ANDERSON, *Cat. of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, pp. 64-65.

dynasty (696 B.C.), a date preceding the introduction of Buddhism from India. It is told that she was sentenced to death by her father for refusing to marry, but the executioner's sword broke without harming her. Her spirit went to Hell, but Hell changed to Paradise, and the king of the infernal regions, to preserve the proprieties of his realm, sent her back to life, when she was miraculously transported on a lotus flower to the island of P'u-t'o.<sup>1</sup>

A second product from the chisel of Masahiro, which is signed with the signature "Kakujusai" and seal inlaid in gold, is added on Plate XLII, Figs. 1-2, to illustrate further this artist's mastery of technique. It may be also of interest to compare his treatment of the familiar subject of Tadamori and the priest with the interpretation presented by Jowa (Plate XXV, Fig. 3) and Somin III (Plate XXXV, Fig. 2). The inlaid figures in the brocade, and the slanting lines of rain in gold relief, flash out from the dark background of shibuichi. The body of the priest is a striking piece of sculpture from copper. His robe which is being torn from his form is of shakudō. On the reverse the artist has inlaid in high relief of shakudō a beautiful temple-lantern standing close to a gnarled tree with leaves of three different shades of gold.<sup>2</sup>

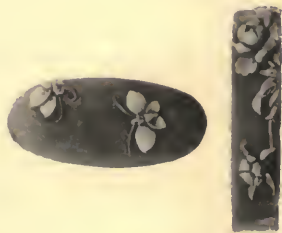
Four of the most prominent Ishiguro artists in the middle of the nineteenth century were Masaaki I and II, Masatsune III, and Yoshinari of the Ogawa family. The shakudō fuchikashira (Plate XLII, Fig. 3) decorated with peonies and butterflies in gold relief is the work of Masatsune III. The tsuba (Fig. 4) on the same plate of light gray shibuichi is signed "Yoshinari, *kakihan*, Seiryūken;" the last is an adopted name hitherto unnoted in the records. The design, which is executed with extreme dexterity, recalls the popular festival celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month and known as the Tanabata Matsuri. It is one of the most poetic celebrations in the Japanese calendar and symbolizes the meeting of the Weaving Maiden and the Oxherd, spirits of a star in Lyra and a star in Aquila, who cross the Milky Way or River of Heaven on this night if the weather is fair. Borrowed as it was from China, there are several versions of this romantic story, many of which are poetically recounted in an exhaustive study of the subject by L. HEARN.<sup>3</sup> He mentions the fact that "it was

<sup>1</sup> W. ANDERSON, *Cat. of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum*, p. 64. This Chou date is purely fictional. The adjustment of the heroine of this Taoist legend with the Buddhist deity Avalokiteçvara is one of comparatively recent date.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. sketch by Hokusai reproduced by L. GONSE (*L'Art japonaise*, Vol. II, p. 309).

<sup>3</sup> *Romance of the Milky Way*, pp. 3-49.

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MOUNTS BY ISHIGURO ARTISTS (pp. 120, 121).

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not until the Tokugawa period that the Tanabata festival became a national holiday, and the popular custom of attaching *tanzaku* (longi-lateral strips of finely tinted paper for the writing of poems) of different colors to freshly cut bamboo, in celebration of the occasion, dates only from the era of Bunsei (1818)."<sup>1</sup> The ceremony had been indulged in with great elaboration among the courtiers since A.D. 775; some of the most beautiful of the poems contained in the Manyōshū (ninth century) being those which treat of the Tanabata festival.

After the popularization of this celebration, it became customary to use *tanzaku* of five colors: blue, red, yellow, green, and white, the five colors said to be seen burning in the two stars when the meeting occurs. Over the little peasant-hut pictured on the tsuba by Yoshinari, one can distinguish these shades inlaid in relief of the five differently colored metals,—shakudō, copper, gold, shibuichi, and silver, with tiny markings incised upon them, and suggestive of writing. The poem-papers are attached to two sprays of bamboo with leaves of gold, which have been thrust into the thatched roof.

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<sup>1</sup>L. HEARN, *Romance of the Milky Way*, p. 19.

XIV. THE ICHINOMIYA SCHOOL AND HOSONO  
MASAMORI OF KYŌTO  
SUMIZŌGAN, GURIBORI, MURAKAMI, AND ENAMELS

In 1719, in Kyōto, was born one of the finest chasers of Japanese metal-work, Nagatsune, who was the founder of the Ichinomiya School. At first apprenticed to a metal gilder, he later became a pupil of Takana-ga (Yasui) and Furukawa Yoshinaga. His early work is signed "Setsuzan." Not only was he a very clever tsuba maker and producer of the smaller sword-fittings, but he also was a painter, having studied under Maruyama Ōkyo and Ishida Yūtei.<sup>1</sup> He evidently did not expend all of his skill in glyptic art on sword-mounts, for G. Jacoby, H. Joly, and S. Hara all mention a cover which he made for a brazier (*shūro*) sent by the daimyō of Tsuchima to the king of Korea, who in turn offered it to K'ien-lung, the Chinese emperor.

Nagatsune, whose ancestry can be traced directly back to Gotō Kojō, sometimes used the name Ganshōshi. He was awarded by the Kyōto court with the title Echizen no Daijō ("feudal chief of Echizen"), which he has inscribed on two pieces in this collection. Dying in 1786, he left several pupils, of only mediocre ability, among them Nagayoshi, his own son, who signed himself Gikōshi Kenryūshi; and Tsunenao Kiubei. Both of these artists lived in Kyōto in the late eighteenth century. A copper tsuba by Tsunenao in this collection. He has sculptured upon it, in low relief, an ox moving toward a winding stream beneath a plum-tree whose blossoms are inlaid in silver hirazōgan (see Plate LXI, Fig. 6 for kakihan). A shakudō-nanako tsuba signed "Nagayoshi Gikōshi" is decorated with a cock, hen and chickens in relief of copper, gold, and silver.

Nagatsune worked both in line and in relief. His skill in the cutting of katakiribori is thought by many to equal that of Sōmin I. On Plate XLIII are two tsuba both of which are of shibuichi decorated with well-rounded reliefs of various metals. The first (Fig. 1), probably an early work of the master, is signed in cursive "Nagatsune," with kakihan. The entire design on obverse and reverse is that picture of family

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<sup>1</sup>Maruyama Ōkyo (1733-95), the founder of the Shijō naturalistic school, studied under Ishida Yūtei, and first followed the rules of the old masters, but soon invented a new style in which he painted from nature, flowers, fishes, insects, and animals, as well as landscape and figure pieces. He won great favor in his day, and even influenced many of the older schools which heretofore had taken their inspiration from the ancients.

life, the cock, hen, and chicks, so often painted by artists of the Shijō school. Black shakudō forms the carefully sculptured neck and tail-feathers of the cock, while the comb is of copper, and the breast of shakudō with gold inlay. The hen and chicks are carved of shakudō and gold. The name Minamoto is inscribed on the other tsuba (Fig. 2), in combination with Echizen no Daijō Nagatsune. S. Hara does not mention the fact that this artist bore the noble name of Minamoto, but many examples in well-known collections are so signed. The scene depicted on this guard is that of a fisherman standing in a stream drawing in his net which is of shakudō. Above, over golden bamboo sprays, fly two geese inlaid in relief of the dark blue metal, with bills and feet of gold. The body of the fisherman is carved from copper with the finest of kebori lines to suggest the hair on the legs. Around the fisherman's shaven head is tied a cloth of silver. He wears a short skirt of straw to the belt of which is tied a carefully plaited fishing-basket in relief of gold.

The pair of menuki on Plate XLIV, Figs. 1 A-B, signed "Ichinomiya Echizen," again illustrate this artist's knowledge of nature and the grace with which he sculptured particularly certain of the birds. This pair of flying geese are for the greater part carved from black shakudō. The breasts are inlaid in a gray shibuichi with black markings. The bill, eyes, feet, and wing-tips are of gold.

The shibuichi fuchikashira (Plate XLIV, Fig. 2) is also by Nagatsune Echizen no Daijō, and the design is accomplished in a very low relief with delicate inlays of shakudō, gold, and silver. On the clamp under a plaited shelter sits Taikōbo or Kiōshiga (Kiang Tse-ya), a Chinese sage. At his side is his fishing basket, suspended from his belt is a small calabash. On the head-piece the Chinese emperor Wen Wang, of the twelfth century B.C., is portrayed. Taibōko was a renowned sage, who late in life was sought out and made counsellor to Wen Wang. In his early years, though very poor, he was so hostile to the evil ways of Chou Sin that he would accept no position in that state, but retired to the principality of Si Po, the Duke of Chou, where he spent much time in deep contemplation as he fished. His wife grew tired of their poverty, and one day on discovering that he fished with a straight iron pin in lieu of a hook, she deserted him in disgust. Later on he aided Si Po, afterwards canonized as Wen Wang, in war, and was appointed by him counsellor. He became very wealthy, whereupon his wife returned and begged him to take her back. In answer he simply poured a dishful of water upon the ground and bade her put it back into the dish, saying,



"It is no more possible that man and wife if once divorced can come together again, than that the spilt water be replaced in the dish." Saddened and ashamed, the wife went and hanged herself. Concerning the peculiar form of his fishing hook, J. Bowes remarks, "Some think that this may suggest that he lived an aimless life, but another interpretation is that wishing to govern by peaceful means, he was content to attain his object by persuasion rather than by force."<sup>1</sup> F. W. MAYERS<sup>2</sup> attributes his successful fishing to his virtue, which, he observes, even the fishes acknowledged, voluntarily impaling themselves upon the straight piece of iron which he used.

The reliefs which decorate the kozuka (Plate XLIV, Fig. 3) signed "Ganshōshi Nagatsune," are high and well-rounded. They are inlaid upon a shakudō nanako plate which in turn is inlaid in the face of a kozuka of copper gilded. The decorations represent the paraphernalia used in the Sarugaku dance, known as Okina Sambaso. The mask in relief of shakudō with carved bosses of silver above the eyebrows reproduces the black mask (*kokushiki*), with white tufts of an old, laughing, bewhiskered man. A companion mask used in the dance is white with black tufts representing another old man. In the centre of the plate in relief of gold is the dance rattle, a cluster of bells (*suzu*) with a handle and tasseled cord. At the left, in relief of shakudō, is a tall cap known as *eboshi*, with tying cords and band of gold. There is often painted on this hat a red disk representing the sun; the twelve corded divisions, distinguishable here, are said to designate the months. The costume which accompanies these accessories in the performance is adorned with one or all of the following emblems of longevity,—the crane, the tortoise, and the pine (see Plate LV, Fig. 2). The origin of this dance appears to have been a religious performance which took place at Nara in A.D. 807 to stop the progress of some fissures suddenly opened in the earth belching forth fire and smoke.<sup>3</sup> The Nō dance known as Takiginō ("Fuel-burning Nō") is presented on the seventh day of the second month, and is a survival of the early Okina Sambaso.

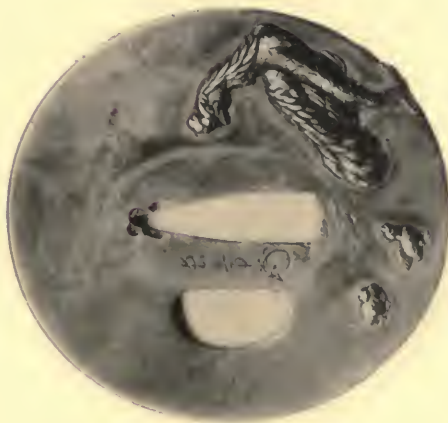
Another artist of the middle eighteenth century, who did not migrate to the city of the shōgun, but remained in the ancient capital Kyōto, where he was born, was Masamori of the Hosono family. Because of his individuality and skill, his sword-fittings may be easily recognized,

<sup>1</sup> J. BOWES, *Japanese Pottery*, p. 494.

<sup>2</sup> *Chinese Reader's Manual*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> H. JOLY, *Legend in Japanese Art*, p. 301. For further particulars, see H. JOLY, *Random Notes on Dances, Masks and Early Forms of Theatre in Japan* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XI, pp. 51-53).

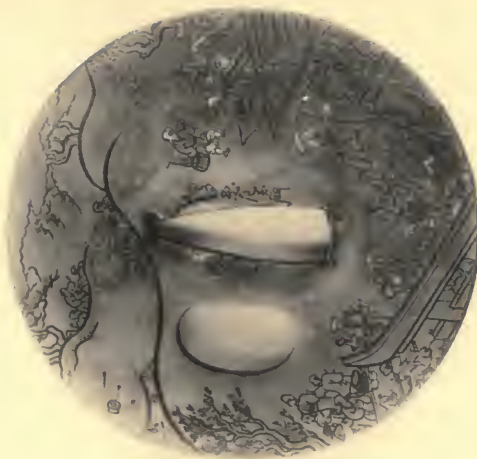




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1-2, Tsuba by Ichinomiya Nagatsune (pp. 122, 123). 3, Hosono Masamori (p. 125).

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decorated as they usually are with a flat inlay combined with engraving, a style which he instituted known as *kebori-sōgan*. He had many followers, who, however, rarely signed their own names, but inscribed their products with the name of their master. The subjects they preferred represent landscapes charmingly engraved, or river-scenes in which many tiny figures with costumes carefully inlaid in gold, copper, or shakudō, are shown at games or celebrations or drifting in crowded boats on calm streams. These subjects may have been suggested by the early masters of the print world, but are more likely to have been taken from scroll paintings (*makimono*).

On Plate XLIII there is a tsuba of shibuichi which is typical of the work of Masamori (Fig. 3). On both sides the artist has made use of silver and gold to inlay various parts of the objects and costumes depicted, thereby breaking up the complicated design and producing at the same time a brilliant effect.

The scene is evidently that in the neighborhood of a temple, for in the immediate foreground a portion of a large torii and the crossed ridge-poles of a temple-building may be distinguished. Pine and plum trees gracefully encompass the scene. At the left of the torii a vendor is seated behind a counter whereon are tiny bowls and two small Inari foxes, one in silver inlay, giving us the clue that this is a temple dedicated to the God of Rice. Many figures are coming forth from the temple; peasants, priests, and samurai, as well as the bulky form of a wrestler, may be singled out. At the right a peasant carrying two baskets suspended on a carrying pole (*ryōgake*) approaches a group seated around a table on which are laid out five sticks with baked bean-curd (*dengaku*), a favorite refreshment of the peasant. A woman with a stiff fan (*uchiwa*) is fanning the flames over which the *dengaku* is roasted. A *sake* tub stands behind her. Beyond and over a hill four men play at target shooting with bows which are inlaid in silver. Another group in the distance motions to unseen friends to join them. Under the magnifying glass each little face takes on a distinct personality, and the delicate outlines prove to be cut with unerring accuracy. The guard is signed "Masamori Hosono Sōzayemon," and is believed, on account of its excellence and beauty, to be a true work from Masamori's own hand.<sup>1</sup>

A most effective form of inlay is occasionally seen in Ishiguro and Sano work, but more frequently is met with on fittings made by the Tsuji school, a group whose founder and protagonist was Rinsendō Mitsumasa (1721-77) of the province of Ōmi. He and his followers,

<sup>1</sup> This tsuba was at one time in the collection of Alfred Beit of London.

particularly Yoshinori, are noted for their skill in the type of decoration known as *sumi-zōgan* ("ink-inlay"), sometimes erroneously called by the name *togashi-zōgan*, which is distinctly different, being as it is an imitation of *nashiji* lacquer. Generally accomplished with dark metal inlaid against a lighter medium, *sumi-zōgan* has actually the effect of ink painting. The piece to be inlaid is fully chiselled out of an independent block of metal with slanting sides, broader at the base than the top. "The object which is to receive the decoration is then channelled in dimensions corresponding with those of the design block, and the latter having been fixed in the channel, the surface is ground and polished until absolute intimacy seems to be obtained between the inlaid design and the metal forming its field.<sup>1</sup>

A most effective design which is often brought out by this process is to be seen on the *kozuka* (Plate XLIV, Fig. 4) by Yoshinori. This specimen is one of a full set of sword-mounts each of which is adorned with a similar motive. The foundation metal is gray shibuichi. Against a silver moon is silhouetted in shakudō inlay a black crow, which clings to a branch cut in *kebori*. Below in the finest of lines of silver *hirazōgan*, there is suggested a curving stream, upon whose waters the moonlight is reflected.

Bashō, the great seventeenth-century poet who specialized in the epigram, has left a charming triplet full of suggestive atmosphere, as all truly Japanese poems are, and one which may have served for the inspiration of Yoshinori's design.

*Kare-eda ni*  
*Karasu no tomari-keri*  
*Aki no kure.*

The end of autumn and some rooks  
Are perched upon a withered branch.<sup>2</sup>

On some rare specimens, artists, particularly those of the Sano school, by whom the process was invented, have superimposed upon a *sumi-zōgan* design a *nanako* treatment which gives the effect of a silken brocade. Two such pieces are to be seen in the collection of G. Oeder (Nos. 1337 and 1355). A shakudō tsuba by Ishigurō Masahide is inlaid with a silver crescent moon. The other piece is a fuchikashira by Sano Saneyoshi.

From the point of view of technical skill, there is nothing to be seen on Japanese sword-fittings which exceeds the welding and carving that is together known as *guribori*. This particular decoration is an imitation of the carved *guri* (*tsui-shiu*) lacquer of China in which layers of differently colored lac are exposed by carving. In *guribori* the cutting is done

<sup>1</sup>F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 245.

<sup>2</sup>B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Japanese Poetry*, p. 190.





1-3, MOUNTS BY ICHINOMIYA NAGATSUNE (p. 123). 4, KOZUKA BY TSUJI YOSHINORI (p. 126).

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in channels of narrowing width. On Plate XLV there is an excellent example of *guribori* in the nineteenth-century tsuba with scalloped edge (Fig. 1). It is composed of fifteen thin, alternating layers of shakudō and copper so skillfully welded together that, while there is no apparent sign of soldering, neither is there any fusion to be detected, the distinct lines of opposed colors being clearly preserved. On either side there are curving channels with sloping sides cut through seven of the layers, thus exposing the red and black metals in stripes and reserving one layer of shakudō between the designs on either side of the tsuba. This tsuba is unsigned, but similar pieces were made by several of the Takahashi family and some of the members of the Shōami and Itō schools.

In the eighteenth century there lived in Yedo a certain stirrup-maker, named Jochiku of the family Murakami. He also is known by the name Nakanori. He is among the first, if not the originator of the style of applying mother-of-pearl to his sword-fittings in order to bring out certain parts of his decoration, such as the wings of insects or the feathers of birds, particularly the peacock and pheasant. In this collection there is an interesting tsuba of iron bounded by a shakudō rim whose decoration doubtless was influenced by Jochiku (Plate XLV, Fig. 2). It is unsigned. In relief of silver there is a broadly sculptured, scaled dragon moving through water in pursuit of the flaming jewel (*tama*), the symbol of perfection. The gem and the imbricated waves are inlaid in shell, the *tama* in a flashing yellowish-red bit, the water shining in the blue and green lights of the shell of the abalone (*Haliotis*, in Japanese *awabi*).

There is associated on the same plate with the foregoing examples of rather uncommon and ornate decoration, a tsuba which is ornamented with reliefs of cloisonné enamel, known as *shippō* (see p. 39). The introduction into Japan of this method of decorating works of art has been by many writers ascribed to Korean artisans of the sixteenth century. Other authorities, particularly OMURA SEIGAI, compiler of the "Record of the Imperial Treasury, Shōshōin" (p. 22) thinks it not improbable that the art of enameling may have been practised in Japan in ancient days, which in this case would mean before the ninth century. One is inclined to leave the matter of its origin open until further investigation, and accredit the revival of the art in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to the influence of Chinese, and possibly European traders who landed at the port of Nagasaki. It is that re-appearance of enamel work which is of interest in this study, for it is believed that the

first sword-fittings which were adorned with *shippō* were made by members of the Hirata family whose founder Dōnin is said to have been at work in Kyōto in the period Keichō (1596-1614). "Dōnin was summoned in 1611 by the shōgun to his country residence at Shizuoka. He received the appointment of chaser in metals and *shippō* worker, a dwelling was allotted to him, with rations of rice, and many gifts were made to him. Here he followed his employment until 1616 when he was called to Yedo. Thenceforward he and his descendants served the court until the downfall of the shōgunate in 1868."<sup>1</sup>

Dōnin, sometimes known as Hikoshirō and later as Niūdō, seldom signed his work. In fact the examples made by the first seven generations of the family are only occasionally signed, and therefore it is difficult to characterize with assurance their work; a signature is never to be taken as a conclusive proof, that being the first and least difficult part to forge in a work of art. After examining certain specimens adjudged to be authentic, J. BOWES<sup>2</sup> has reached the following conclusions:—

"In Hirata work the cloisons are of gold, and the enamels are both translucent and opaque with their surfaces ground and unground, whereas in the later pieces the cloisons are of brass and the pastes always opaque and ground. The latter are upon copper foundations, whilst the Hirata employed a variety of metals, iron, shakudō, shibuichi, bronze, and occasionally silver and lacquer. In later work the surfaces are completely covered with cloisons and enamel pastes; the Hirata craftsmen, on the other hand, merely ornamented the grounds of the objects treated with small subjects and devices of enamel work, such as *takaramono*, rosettes, blossoms, fan-shaped fields, birds, and flowers. The designs are outlined in gold ribbons or wire fixed to the metal base, the various parts of the subject being filled with enamel pastes which are afterward vitrified, and the completed works are then inserted in cavities prepared for their reception in the article decorated. The two methods of enamelling are often found associated on a piece, cloisonné (enamelling on a metal base confined within ribbon-like walls) and champ-levé (enamelling sunk into a hollowed-out patch in the object decorated with pastes separated by cloisons)."

One other form of decoration remains for notice: the small figures executed in gold wire either incrustated or inlaid, generally in spiral forms or dots without the addition of any enamel paste. These constantly

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<sup>1</sup> J. BOWES, Notes on Shippō, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 82.





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1, GURIBORI (p. 126). 2, MOTHER-OF-PEARL (p. 127). 3, ENAMEL DECORATION (p. 129).

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appear on Hirata work. The Hirata ornamented many sword-guards made by other makers than themselves. The name that may be inscribed on such tsuba is more likely to be the name of the maker of the guard rather than that of the enameller. Such is thought to be the case with the iron tsuba on Plate XLV, Fig. 3, which is signed "Yoshiaki," a name borne by two craftsmen listed by S. Hara, one of the Shimizu family, the other of the Ōzaka family, both early nineteenth-century workers. The iris (*shobu*) at the left is in high relief of gilded copper with leaves of dark blue shakudō. Above, in cloisonné with gold threads and enamels of green, blue, white, and lilac, are a butterfly and a bee. These little insects are excellently made, and resemble very closely two similar reliefs on a kozuka,<sup>1</sup> which is signed "Narisuke," the name of a nineteenth-century descendant of Dōnin.

The genealogy of the Hirata family of Mino Province is carefully worked out, and their signatures reproduced by J. Bowes, who illustrates many beautiful examples of their work.<sup>2</sup> The climax of their art was reached in the early nineteenth century by Harunari and Narimasa, both shippō workers to the shōguns. Their sword-fittings are of exquisite workmanship, made of a variety of metals and enriched with forms in opaque enamels and gold-wire spirals. The larger objects of metal by these artists, such as braziers, perfume burners, and incense boxes (*kogo*), are among the important examples of Japanese metal work.

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<sup>1</sup>J. BOWES, Notes on Shippō, Plate A, No. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Another Hirata family lived in the province of Awa, but the members are not known to have made *shippō*.

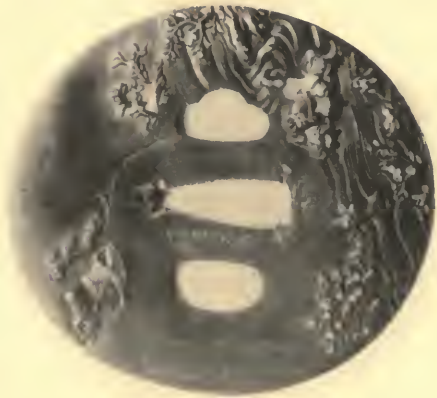
## XV. THE SCHOOLS OF MITO. THE TAMAGAWA FAMILY

From the early eighteenth on through the nineteenth century, there lived in the city of Mito in Hitachi Province many craftsmen skilled in the working of metals, who produced fittings for the sword. Employing both iron and alloys, they worked in various styles, generally in relief. Not only did they leave examples illustrative of their own originality, they also are known to have made remarkable copies after the Nara and Yokoya models. While there are several independent artists who signed their work "made in Mito," the majority of the craftsmen of this city belonged to one of the four following groups which had settled there at various times: the Sekijōken, the Kōami, the Hitotsuyanagi or Ichiryū, and the Yegawa families.

The Sekijōken school was founded by Ōyama Taizan Motozane (1739-1829), a pupil of Motonori of the Yokoya family. In spite of the fact that he was acquainted with the katakiribori of Sōmin and his followers, he and his pupils seldom worked in line engraving, but markedly show forth the influence of the leaders of the Nara school. Indeed, so completely did they understand the technique and spirit of Jōi and Toshinaga that several of their fittings have been attributed to those earlier masters themselves. A great number of artists flocked to the studio of Motozane to learn the craft. Motozane II, Motosada, and Motonaga are among the pupils, many of whom bear names beginning with the same character as that of their revered master.

One of the outstanding pupils is Motoharu of the Fujita family who lived in the early years of the nineteenth century. Brown iron has been chosen for the circular tsuba bearing his name (Plate XLVI, Fig. 1). Thereon he has sculptured within a narrow rim in marubori zōgan an interesting delineation of the Chinese legend of Hwang Shi Kung, the Yellow Stone Elder, and Chang Liang, chief counsellor of the founder of the Han dynasty, known as Chorio in Japan. One day the latter met an aged man, by name Kosekiko (Hwang Shi Kung), who had dropped his shoe into the river. Chorio restored the shoe to Kosekiko, who bade his younger companion meet him five days later at a certain place. "After thrice postponing the promised revelation because each time Chang had failed to arrive respectfully at an earlier hour than his strange acquaintance, the old man, satisfied at length, drew from his

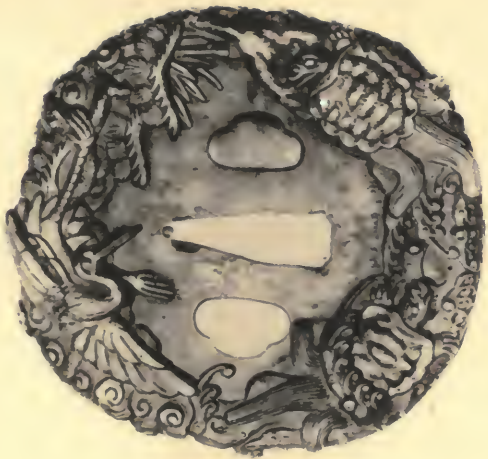




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TSUBA BY MITO ARTISTS (pp. 130-132).



robe a volume which he bestowed upon him with the words, 'He who studies this book shall become a king's preceptor!' He added that in thirteen years' time Chang Liang would meet him in the shape of a yellow stone at Ku Cheng. This prediction was verified by the finding of a yellow stone at the time and place, as prophesied."<sup>1</sup>

Motoharu has lightened the dark iron of his tsuba with inlays of other metals, modelling the faces in silver and carving the horse trappings, the tongue and flaming appendages of the dragon in gold. In technique this tsuba is suggestive of the work of the Hikone group, with the additional freedom and vigor of carving which had naturally developed in a century and a half.

Another illustrious disciple of Motozane I was Hisanaga of the Takase family, also known as Fūryūken, who lived at the end of the eighteenth century. He is the maker of a small shibuichi tsuba in this collection, a guard of irregular form ornamented on both sides with a landscape in Chinese style. The tsuba of shakudō (Plate XLVI, Fig. 2) is likewise an example of his excellent chiselling. It is adorned with a representation of Narihira on a fully caparisoned horse, standing with his groom in the flowing stream of Tamagawa. On the edges of the shore grow low cherry-trees with full blooms carved in silver and gold relief.

Narihira, one of the Six Poetical Geniuses (Rokkasen), is a character well-beloved and intimately known, especially from the *Ise Monogatari* (tenth century), one of the famous narratives in Japanese literature, which relates the adventures of this young nobleman, who finally was banished to Azuma on account of an intrigue with the empress. He is generally pictured as gazing up toward Mt. Fuji, or standing on the banks of the Tamagawa River, or looking upon the floating maple-leaves upon Tatsutagawa.

Kōami of the Kikuchi family had studied the art of making sword-fittings with Gotō Renjō at the end of the seventeenth century. He was the founder of the Kōami family whose members worked in Mito, advocating the style of the Gotō artists. His most renowned pupil was Yatabe Michinaga or Tsūjū, whose name was derived from the two Gotō artists, Tsūjō and Jūjō. His early works reflect the Gōtō influence, but it is apparent that the charm of the Nara fittings influenced him as well, and that he later developed a style quite his own. While he often worked in the alloys, most of his fittings are of iron, as is the case of the tsuba on Plate XLVI, Fig. 3. This guard is unusually heavy, the edge

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<sup>1</sup>F. W. MAYERS, *Chinese Reader's Manual*, p. 8.

being covered with high reliefs of iron, copper, and gold representing the emblems of longevity: the crane, the tortoise, the pine, and the bamboo. At the top, rolling clouds are sculptured; at the base, breaking waves with flecks of foam touched in gold nunome are broadly carved. The signature is inlaid in gold on the obverse.

The Hitotsuyanagi or Ichiryū school was founded in the middle of the eighteenth century by a member of the Hirano family, by name Tomoyoshi, a pupil of Shinozaki Yasuhira, who in turn had been trained by Nara Yasuchika I. There is little of the Nara style, however, to be detected in the work of the Hitotsuyanagi. For subjects they preferred dragons, birds, and *kara-shishi* ("Chinese lions"), the latter being presented in a style at times strongly reflecting the art of Yanagawa Naomasa. There were four skillful artists in this school, by the name of Tomoyoshi, all of whom, save Tomoyoshi III, used the names Rīōsuke and Izayemon. The tsuba on Plate XLVII, Fig. 1, is signed "Hitotsuyanagi Tomoyoshi." It is carved after the manner of one of the first two of these masters, who generally worked in iron, as in this case. The larger portion of the metal has been chiselled away, leaving a forceful carving of a scaled dragon confined within a narrow rim inlaid in a key-pattern in silver. This design is often met with. A similar tsuba, likewise by Hitotsuyanagi Tomoyoshi, is illustrated by L. GONSE.<sup>1</sup> A second tsuba in the collection of Field Museum of Natural History bears the same name, but is obviously the work of Tomoyoshi III or IV, who usually employed the alloys with effect. The tsuba referred to is made of two metals, silver and shakudō. They are so combined that one half of the field (divided diagonally) is dark, while the other is light. The subject of decoration is the tiger, the king of beasts, near a waterfall beneath rain and wind-driven clouds.

Tomoaki, a pupil of Tomoyoshi III, and Tomotsugu, who worked under the direction of Tomoyoshi IV, are both represented by tsuba in this collection. Each of these artists, in the choice of his subjects of decoration and in his manipulation of the metals used, was influenced by the masters of the Nara school, selecting for the most part historical personages or birds and animals.

The fourth noted family of Mito, that known as the Yegawa, was an offshoot of the Hitotsuyanagi, having been founded by Toshimasa, chiseller to the daimyō of Kuruma and pupil of Tomomichi, the second son of Tomoyoshi I. In the majority of cases, the fittings made by

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<sup>1</sup>L'Art japonaise, Vol. II, Plate xvi, No. 7.





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TSUBA BY MITO ARTISTS (pp. 132-134).

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TSUBA BY TAMAGAWA ARTISTS (pp. 134-136).

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this group are of the alloys, though an occasional piece in iron testifies to their skill in handling the sterner medium with equal effect.

An independent artist, whose original style can easily be recognized, is Masatsugu Ichijusai, whom H. JOLY and K. TOMITA<sup>1</sup> place in the early nineteenth century. His style is bold and striking. Employing iron for the foundation, he has brought out the details with reliefs of silver and extremely fine inlay of gold. Fig. 2 on Plate XLVII is an excellent example of his skill, signed as it is, "Made by Masatsugu Ichijusai who lived in Suifu (Mito)." Of irregular form, the edge is bounded by a cloud-like design similar to the rugged outline of the seppa dai. On the unevenly chiselled surface in low relief in the centre of the guard is the dramatic figure of T'ai Kung, the aged priest, who with his double-edged sword executed Ta Ki, one of China's most notoriously wicked women.

As paramour of the emperor Chou Sin she led the court into most dissolute practices. When the reformers tried to change the habits of the ruler, they were rewarded by being made to walk on a red hot tube of copper smeared with oil until they fell into a blazing pit of charcoal below. Finally, Wu Wang founder of the Chou dynasty, rose and opposed the emperor who, defeated, fled to a palace which he set on fire. By order of Wu Wang, Ta Ki was killed by an old priest, T'ai Kung, and her body burned. Her spirit is said to have emerged in the form of a nine-tailed fox.<sup>2</sup> The reverse of this tsuba by Masatsugu makes quite as dramatic an appeal as the obverse side. Over a similarly roughened ground are inlaid in gold relief flashes of lightning, one of which encompasses the neck of a large fox. The head is in silver relief, realistically carved; the nine tails are skillfully inlaid in the finest of gold nunome-zōgan.

A name which is not listed in the record of metal-workers, compiled by S. Hara, is that of Yasumitsu, who states on the tsuba (Plate XLVII, Fig. 3) that he was a resident of Mito. He was independent, as far as is known, of any of the schools. The tsuba made by him is of iron and of mokkō form. On both sides patches have been broadly chiselled away to produce an uneven ground. On the reverse a full moon emerging from clouds, is inlaid in silver nunome; on the obverse, near snow-laden rushes in relief of copper, gold, and silver, is a pair of mandarin

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<sup>1</sup>Japanese Art and Handicraft, p. 176.

<sup>2</sup>F. W. MAYERS, Chinese Reader's Manual, p. 211; and H. JOLY, Legend in Japanese Art, p. 353.

ducks (*oshidori*), emblem of conjugal felicity, a subject which appears constantly in Chinese and Japanese art.

The name of three other unaffiliated artists who are represented in this collection should be mentioned before leaving the large Mito group. Watari Tanetora has sculptured a scaled dragon writhing through cavernous openings in an iron guard dated "sixth year of Bunkwa"—that is, 1811. The glyptic art of Katsuhira Seiryōken may be admired in a small tsuba, also of iron, from which two flying cranes are carved in the round (see also p. 183). Seo Mototada, who signs himself a pupil of Nanjō (Motonaga) and a retainer of Kōjo, has left a pleasing iron tsuba decorated with a copper badger (*tanuki*) puffed out in the orthodox Japanese fashion and beating a tattoo on his abdomen, as he looks up toward the full moon inlaid in relief of gold.

Besides the groups presided over by the four families mentioned at the opening of this chapter, there was a large school known as the Tamagawa, which was an offshoot of the Kōami, having sprung from the disciple of that school, named Michinaga, who died in 1768 (p. 131). In this group there were over thirty members, most of whom showed a strong tendency toward the Nara style, using a variety of metals, and generally adorning their fittings with figures in relief. Most renowned among these men was Yoshinaga, a pupil of the founder and maker of the tsuba on Plate XLVIII, Fig. 1. This guard is of dark blue shakudō and adorned with reliefs in several shades of gold, silver, shibuichi, and copper. The scene depicted is often met with and illustrates the descent of Yoshitsune on the castle of the Taira, at the battle of Ichi-no-Tani in 1184. The advance-guard, riding a brown horse, dashes down the cliff which is described in the records as "too steep for the descent of apes." Yoshitsune follows, wearing the horned helmet now to be seen in the monastery on Mount Kuruma. He rides a black charger, and an attendant following holds aloft the Genji standard. The faces of the armed companions are sculptured in a realistic manner. On the reverse side of the tsuba, above foam-flecked waves, rises the castle of the enemy, with pennants of silver and gold flying in the breeze. The details of the costumes, armor, and horse-trappings are admirably worked out; even the fur-covered scabbard on Yoshitsune's long sword is finished with delicate inlay and surface carving to produce the soft texture of the tiger skin.

A nephew and pupil, named Yoshihisa Joyeiken, Kukuken, or Tōun, succeeded Yoshinaga, and until 1797, when he died at the age of sixty-seven years, held up the glory of the family. He was followed by his

adopted son, Yoshihisa II, sometimes known as Yoshinori. He, in turn, handed down his skill in the craft of tsuba-making to his son Yoshihisa III, who sometimes signed himself "Yoshiyuki."

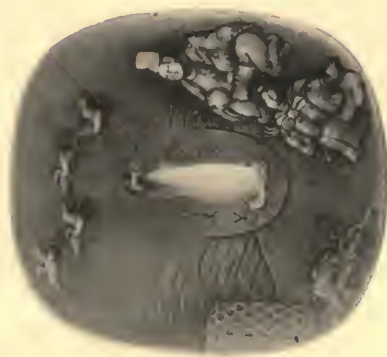
The son of Yoshinaga bore his father's name, but inscribed it with different characters (see p. 189) and often used the name Masanaga. He has left some good examples of metal-work, but he did not possess the originality and the technical excellence of his cousins, named Yoshihisa. He is responsible, however, for the training of such a successful artist as Yasunori of the Nukagawa family, who in the early nineteenth century studied under him. Among the several young craftsmen who frequented the studio of the last-mentioned artist, were Kanzawa Mitsunaga Kōyōsai or Ichimusai of Yedo and Yasunaga, who lived in the province of Kozuke in the early nineteenth century. Two tsuba of brass signed "Yasunaga" with kakikan are in this collection; one of them appears in Plate XLVIII, Fig. 2. On the obverse, upon an ishime surface, the artist has inlaid in high relief a forceful portrait of the Buddhist priest Daruma, Bodhidharma, the patriarch of India, to whom is attributed the introduction into China of the Zen sect of Buddhism in the sixth century. Legend has been busy surrounding this character with interesting experiences. He is said to have sat at one time so long in contemplation, that on arising his legs fell off, having rotted away in the nine years of his inactivity. Again, while meditating, he is reported to have fallen asleep. On awaking he was so disturbed at his weakness, that he cut off his eyelids and threw them on the ground, whereupon, according to some accounts, they grew into tea leaves. Often represented as crossing a stream on a reed or journeying to China carrying a single shoe, he is here pictured with uncovered head and evidently in deep concentration of thought, a bold and simple delineation characteristic of Zen ideals. The head is sculptured from shibuichi, gray brown in tone and tending to suggest a swarthy skin. In the ears are hung rings of gold. The robe in which his hand is hidden is carved from copper. On the reverse of the tsuba there is in relief of silver a golden handled chowry of the form called *hossu*, or *futsujin*, originally made of the white hair of a yak or of a horse, and carried by Buddhist priests to be used symbolically to rid the atmosphere of evil influences or actually to drive away insects disturbing to contemplation.

The third tsuba on Plate XLVIII is imbued with the Buddhistic spirit, which is likewise suggested with breadth and subtlety. It is signed "Yasunori at the base of San Yen mountain" (*Yasunori* [kaki-han] *Oite San Yen Yama fumoto*). On the reverse is the date "Third



Year of Meiji;" that is, 1870. The tsuba is of silver with plain surface save for a bit of carving around the riohitsu. Dried reeds and two faded lotus-leaves tell of the swampy pond which the dull silver suggests. The changing colors of the dying leaves are reproduced in a soft brown iron tinged on the edges with yellow gold,—a most unusual combination to find inlaid on the light silver, but one which is particularly effective. Among the different symbolisms woven around the lotus, that of the pale flower rising from the mud, thus signifying the possibility of a pure life emerging from a dark and noisome environment, is one which is ever eloquent in its appeal. Yasunori is an unknown artist so far as the records are concerned, but he is associated with the Tamagawa family, since it is thought likely that he studied under Nukagawa Yasunori. Another example from his hand appears in the collection of G. Oeder (No. 1725).





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MOUNTS BY UCHIKOSHI HIRONAGA (pp. 137-139).

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1911

## XVI. THE UCHIKOSHI AND TANAKA SCHOOLS. THE SONOBE FAMILY

In Yedo, about the year 1800, a pupil of Tamagawa Yoshinaga (Masanaga) founded the school known as the Uchikoshi. His name may be read in three ways: Hironaga, Hirotoishi, or Koju; all of these readings are apt to be encountered in the lists of makers of sword-fittings. His early name, Konishi Bunshichi, rarely appears. In the excellence of finish and the decorative quality of his pieces, one immediately recognizes the heritage which came to all metal-workers in Japan in the nineteenth century. An almost countless number of processes had been perfected through the foregoing centuries. Methods of moulding and forging, recipes for mixing and coloring metals, treatments for the production of unusual surface decoration, inlay of various kinds, line engraving and tooling, chiselling in saw-cuts or sculpturing in the round, all of these methods of adorning the metal mounts had been tried, improved upon, and brought to a high degree of excellence by the hundreds of artists who had spent their time and effort on the decoration of the sword.

The products of Hironaga Ichijōsai or Jōunsai are in most cases happy evidence of the accumulated skill of the pioneer craftsmen. On Plate XLIX there are five pieces from the chisel of this artist which illustrate the diversity of his genius. Fig. 1 is a shibuichi tsuba, with a clean-cut ishime ground broken by soft waves cut in kebori. At the right, in high relief of gold, shakudō, and shibuichi, is the figure of Yoritomo, founder of the shōgunate in 1192 and half-brother of Yoshitsune. Engaged in one of his favorite pastimes, he and his attendant are looking up toward flying cranes which have been released from a bamboo cage. Yoritomo was wont to tie on their feet cards warning persons against the capture of these birds, requesting instead that any who saw them alight would record that fact and send them back. On the reverse side of the tsuba a sword-bearer kneels near the water's edge. Inlaid in gold, on the main figure on the obverse, is the gentian crest of the Minamoto family of which Yoritomo was a member. The bird cage is in low relief of gold, the cranes are of silver with shakudō tail-feathers, and the feet and cards are of gold. On this tsuba and the next one to be considered the signature is written in cursive, "Hironaga (kakihan) Ichijōsai."

The tsuba in Fig. 2, made of iron with a soft brown patina, illustrates Hironaga's skill in sculpturing the harder metal. At the top of the tsuba, soft clouds partly cover the uppermost branches of a tree carved in the round. At the right, two figures approach, one of whom leads a *kara-shishi* ("Chinese lion"), tethered by a golden chain. H. JOLY<sup>1</sup> describes this couple as "the foreigners from Ranha." The face, arms, and legs of the woman are of shibuichi, her eyes of gold, and the details of her costume of gold and silver. The man's figure, carved entirely from the iron, is lightened by bosses of gold inlay on his leggings and skirt. On the reverse, near a waterfall inlaid in silver, are bamboo shoots in gold relief.

The dark blue shakudō tsuba (Plate XLIX, Fig. 3) is also the work of Hironaga who states thereon that he was a dweller in Yedo. The kakihan is distinctly different from the one following the signatures written in cursive. This highly finished piece of metal-work exemplifies the jewelry-like quality of nineteenth-century mounts. It is a far cry from the pure art displayed in the sombre iron guards of Myōchin Nobuiye or of the graceful silhouettes of the Akasaka and Higo artists or of Kinai of Echizen. The tsuba is no longer a protective plaque for a fighting warrior's hand tested in grim battle, but rather the exquisite adornment for a sword which supplements the elegant costume worn at the shōgun's court. Much is heard of the "Glorious Primitives," and many collectors have gone so far as to disdain any except the old iron guards; but a close examination of this tsuba by Hironaga and many other contemporary pieces disproves the popular theory that only the old are the truly artistic products. It is simply that the appeal of these fittings, characteristic of the efflorescent age, is a different one from the restrained and noble beauty displayed on the earlier mounts.

The subjects portrayed on this sword-guard (Plate XLIX, Fig. 3) appear very often on sword-fittings. A tsuba in this collection by Jōi, as well as several fuchikashira, are ornamented with one, two, or all three of the famous Chinese heroes of Shu.

Kwan Yü (died A.D. 219), Liu Pei (A.D. 162-223, Japanese Gentoku, see p. 114), and Chang Fei (died in A.D. 220), known in Japan as Chōhi, were three famed friends who plighted their allegiance to one another in a peach garden at Cho in Chi-li Province. Liu Pei, later emperor of Shu and founder of the Han dynasty, was followed through all the stirring adventures of his checkered career by Kwan Yü. The latter performed many valiant acts, and was celebrated as one of China's military

<sup>1</sup>Japanese Art and Handicraft, p. 145, No. 552.



heroes, until in 1594 he was proclaimed *ti* ("emperor") and henceforward worshipped as Kwan Ti, the "God of War." Chang Fei, who followed the trade of a butcher until he allied himself with Liu Pei and Kwan Yü, also developed, through the exploits of his fellows, into a brave and mighty warrior. He was made ruler of Shu by Liu Pei.

On this tsuba, Chōhi, with fan-like beard, leans on a forked halberd, and stands behind Kwan Yü whom Hironaga has pictured seated at a table and gazing intently upon an open book. The colors of the metals chosen to paint these combined portraits are many and beautiful. The face of Kwan Yü is of copper. His long, flowing, black beard is of shakudō very carefully chiselled in kebori. Chōhi's hair is of shibuichi, his face of silver, his eyes are flashing gold with black pupils. Brocade patterns on both of the costumes are brought out by the inlaying of three shades of gold. Such details as the tassel on the halberd and the tying cords on Chōhi's breastplate are of a very light red copper.

This last-mentioned metal forms the obverse side of the kozuka (Plate XLIX, Fig. 4), also the work of the master Hironaga. At the right may be distinguished a calabash from which proceeds a puff of wind laden with innumerable prancing horses, spotted in gold, and continuing in their tumultuous movement on the reverse side of the kozuka where they are etched in kebori. It is a charming reference to the Sen-nin Chokwaro, known in China as Chang Kwo, and one of the Eight Immortals of the Taoists. This being had the power to evoke from his calabash a horse or mule, on whose back he proceeded on long journeys. When through with the beast, he would fold it up and put it back into the receptacle, where it would remain until the next journey, when, ejecting water from his mouth upon the crumpled form, Chokwaro would bring the horse to life again. H. Joly<sup>1</sup> asserts that the horse coming out of a gourd refers to the proverb, "The horse coming out of a gourd is a very unexpected occurrence" (*Hyotan kara koma*).

The object in Fig. 5 (Plate XLIX) is signed with the names Jōunsai (inlaid in gold) and Hironaga (inlaid in copper). It is a kozuka of shakudō with a nanako obverse, upon which, in relief of silver, shibuichi, copper, and gold, Kanzan and Jittoku (p. 94) lie resting. Three ribbon-like bands of copper, gold, and silver are inlaid obliquely across the reverse side.

Hironaga had several pupils, few of whom, however, are listed in the records. There are two whose names appear in Hara's list, and who also are represented by specimens in this collection. Hiroyasu, also

<sup>1</sup> Legend in Japanese Art, p. 42.

called Jinzō, came from the province of Echigo. He has chosen two interesting subjects to decorate the tsuba which represent him in this study. His treatment of waves on the brass guard (Plate L, Fig. 1) is strongly reflective of his teacher's methods. At the right stands a fisherman whose small skiff, in relief of copper, may be seen on the reverse side of the guard. The muscular figure of the man is chiselled from shibuichi. He wears a straw skirt, to the belt of which is attached a basket in relief of gold. On his brow is a head-band of silver and in his hand a burning torch with flames of red copper. With two slender lines, in relief of gold, he guides a pair of cormorants sculptured from shakudō with bills of silver.

B. CHAMBERLAIN<sup>1</sup> quotes an account written by Maj.-Gen. Palmer, who describes in detail the unique process of fishing with cormorants as practised in Japan. This sport is always carried on at night, when the startled fish swim toward the blazing torches. The cormorants are harnessed with a cord around the body, to which is attached a whalebone strip used to steady the bird as it is lowered into or lifted from the water. About the neck is drawn a metal band tight enough so as to allow only small fish to pass below it. The larger fish are lodged in the peculiar sac in the throat. After swallowing a certain number of fish, the bird becomes dizzy, and is drawn in and made to disgorge his capture. Cormorants are said to become wise enough not to try to swallow a fish-tail first, lest the tail and fins cut the throat. They have been seen to flip a fish into the air and catch it head first. Such an exhibition is pictured on the tsuba (Plate L, Fig. 1), where the cormorant at the left reaches up with open bill toward a small fish descending.

The other guard signed by Hiroyasu (Plate L, Fig. 2) is of shakudō with a surface decoration of fine ishime. The scene is evidently that outside the entrance of a house on New Year's day. On both the reverse and obverse sides, the pine placed on either side of the door (*kado matsu*) is chiselled in kebori, the new growths on the tips of each branch being inlaid in relief of gold. Above hangs a *shimenawa* (p. 118). The straw rope itself and the pendants are in relief of yellow gold, the leaves of the fern (*Polypodium dicotomon*, in Japanese *urajiro*) are carved from green shibuichi, while the paper *gohei* are made of silver. At the right, two strolling dancers are performing the lion dance (*shishi mai* or *dai kagura*), one of the oldest dances of Japan, and one which is still performed as a sacred dance at certain temples. It

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<sup>1</sup> Things Japanese, 5th ed., pp. 105-108.



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1-2, TSUBA BY HIROYASU (p. 140). 3, TSUBA BY HIROYOSHI OF UCHIKOSHI SCHOOL (p. 141).

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is doubtless an adaptation from a foreign dance, and is most likely derived from the *taiheiraku* of China.<sup>1</sup>

For several centuries it has been performed on New Year's day by strolling street dancers. Up until 1655 it was customary to see two unattended performers going from door to door. In the later years the dancers were often accompanied by a number of musicians, a collector, and a few stage properties. It is the older and simpler form which is represented on the *tsuba* illustrated herein. A man, who doubtless has a small drum suspended beneath the robe, holds in his hand a drumstick, and wears the typical *shishi* mask with movable jaw. A pendant *gohei* is hanging down his back. His figure is completely covered with a large rippling cloth, sculptured from shakudō with a chiselled pattern in which gold dots are inlaid. A young attendant in shibuichi dress with a girdle of gold is creeping under the loose end of the robe preparatory to the enacting of the dance. The colored metals, such as the copper from which the mask is carved, and the green shibuichi and yellow gold used to depict the *shimenawa*, are set off to fine effect by the dark blue shakudō background.

The *tsuba* associated on the same plate with the two foregoing pieces does not possess particular beauty, but is reproduced as a characteristic example of another of Hironaga's pupils. Hiroyoshi Jogetsusai, who occasionally signed himself Gensuke, lived in the early nineteenth century, and very often decorated his sword-fittings with the subject of the rats' or foxes' wedding. On the obverse side of this brass *tsuba* (Plate L, Fig. 3), three animals clothed as samurai head the procession which is continued on the reverse. The main part of the large company is etched in *kebori* on the under side of the sword-guard. In the midst of this pictured crowd, there is a litter in which the bride is being carried to the home of her husband. H. JOLY,<sup>2</sup> in describing a similar specimen, designates the animals as rats, but it seems far more likely that they represent foxes, and that this decoration is a picture of the foxes' wedding made familiar to many persons through A. MITFORD'S<sup>3</sup> recounting of the story. To be sure, the day represented on this *tsuba* seems to be a fair one, for the slanting lines of rain usually accompanying the foxes' procession are not here depicted. The figures on the obverse are in relief of various metals, shibuichi, gold, silver, and shakudō. Two carry paper lanterns, while a third bears upon his shoulder a halberd

<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY, *Random Notes on Dances, Masks and the Early Forms of Theatre in Japan* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XI, p. 30).

<sup>2</sup> *Japanese Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection*, No. 1706.

<sup>3</sup> *Tales of Old Japan*, pp. 270-272.

covered over with a cloth. Many pieces bearing this subject of decoration are to be seen in collections of sword-fittings, three are owned by this museum, two of them being unsigned and inferior in workmanship to this one by Hiroyoshi Jogetsusai.

Though there were several schools of the name Tanaka in Yedo and Kyōto, the two which had the largest following were those founded by Masayoshi and Kiyonaga, respectively. Masayoshi had studied under Gotō Yetsujō in the beginning of the eighteenth century. He was succeeded by his son Masafusa who further perfected his art by working in the studio of Gotō Ranjō. Tomomasa, Yoshiaki, and Yoshiyuki all belong to this group which was strictly influenced by the Gotō artists.

Kiyonaga, on the other hand, seems to have evolved for himself an individual style from the diligent study of casts of pieces by good masters which he was wont to collect. Among his many pupils were Kiyoshige, his son, and Toshikage and Toshishige (often erroneously called Nagakage and Nagashige).<sup>1</sup> These artists worked in various metals, using the alloys quite as often as they employed iron. It was through the medium of the harder metal, however, that their finest effects were accomplished. Kiyonaga inaugurated a peculiar style of gold and silver nunome-zōgan, particularly suited to the reproducing of clouds. This method of decoration shows up to full advantage when applied to a dark brown iron background. Fujiwara Kiyonaga, also known by the names Tōryūsai and Bunjirō, was awarded the honorary title of Hōgen ("Eye of the Law"). Very often he signed his products solely with his kakihan, particularly those which were made as presentation tsuba (*kenjo*).<sup>2</sup>

His most renowned pupil is Morikawa Toshikage, who was born in 1839, and who was still living at the age of forty. He used the names Hoshinsai and Ichiryūshi, occasionally adding the Fujiwara seal. Two products from his chisel are in this collection, one being illustrated in Plate LI, Figs. 1 and 2. It has been deemed advisable to illustrate both the obverse and reverse sides of this iron tsuba of mōkō form, since each is an excellent manifestation of the genius of Toshikage. The subject, the lion (*shishi*) and the king of flowers, the peony (in this combination known as *botan ni kara-shishi*), is very often depicted, but seldom does it have as dramatic an interpretation as on this small field. Within a raised rim chiselled in cloud-like irregularity, the artist has sculptured

<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY, *Inscriptions of Japanese Sword Fittings* (*Transactions Japan Soc.*, Vol. XV, p. 90).



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1-2, TSUBA BY TOSHIKAGE (p. 112). 3, TSUBA BY MASAKAGE OF TANAKA SCHOOL (p. 143).

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a driving storm passing over a clouded mountain. Below is a rushing stream on whose waves are golden flecks of foam. The snarling lion with flowing mane and tail is modelled in relief of shibuichi, the spots on his coat being inlaid in gold. The whole body of the animal is instinct with life. Above, through the slanting lines of rain, emerge peonies delicately carved from silver; their dark leaves of iron are touched with gold nunome. It is interesting to compare this tsuba with two pieces in the Naunton collection,<sup>1</sup> which are also the work of this artist. They are of shibuichi decorated with reliefs very closely resembling those described above. The other tsuba by Toshikage, in this Museum, is oval, and likewise bounded by a raised rim within which there is a cloudy border. A tiger, seated near large bamboo sprouts, is pictured on the obverse, while a mountain-peak and rushing stream in relief of silver decorate the reverse.

This same popular subject, the king of beasts, the tiger seeking out a place of hiding and protection in the bamboo thicket, is presented by another member of the Tanaka school. "Masakage Hōsonsai" is the name inscribed upon the iron tsuba of mokkō form in Plate LI, Fig. 3. Though this artist was evidently unknown to Hara, JOLY describes a tsuba which also bears his signature.<sup>2</sup> Silver nunome has been inlaid along the cloudy strip which outlines the field. Silver and gold have been utilized to bring out the snow on the overhanging pine and the stripes of the tiger's skin. It is a typical Tanaka sword-guard. The riohitsu are small, while the opening for the blade is in this case large and of an unusual form. Tanaka artists were accustomed to partly fill in the terminations of this opening with small plates of alloy covered over with gold nunome-zōgan. Those plates are missing in this case. Another tsuba, signed with kakihan only (Plate LXI, Fig. 8), resembles the work of the Tanaka. It is of iron softly modelled, the centre carved in openwork and tinged with clouds of gold. Small shells are inlaid in relief. The kakihan is that of Shigeyasu of the Inouye family.<sup>3</sup>

Takamoto Hidemuni, born in Yedo in 1820, was a pupil of Kiyonaga, who evidently broke away from the Tanaka style and preferred to portray personages after the style of the Ishiguro and Hamano schools, showing forth a luxury of decoration and a marked delicacy of chiselling. Both of the tsuba in this collection, which are signed with his full name,

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<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY, Japanese Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection, Nos. 2289 and 2290.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, No. 2302. For kakihan see Plate LXI, Fig. 7, in this publication.

<sup>3</sup> According to the *Ko kon kinko ben ran*, Vol. II, p. 23.

are made of shibuichi, and are of a modified mōkō form. The figure of Minamoto Yoshiie (Plate LII, Fig. 1) is worked out in fine detail. The smiling face is in relief of silver surmounted by the nobleman's black cap (*eboshi*) made of shakudō with the tying cord of gold. The hero wears a suit of armor over a brocaded robe and holds in his right hand a folding fan. The fur-covered scabbard of his long sword may be seen projecting beyond his heavy shoulder-piece. The horse on which he rides is sculptured from shakudō, suggesting a glossy black coat against which the silver bridle and heavy, gold-fringed trappings shine in splendor. The incident in the life of Yoshiie here depicted is an allusion to a poem which he wrote, as he looked upon the fallen cherry-blossoms at the gate of Nakoso:

*Fuku kaze wa  
Nakoso no seki to  
Omoye domo  
Michi mo senichiru  
Yamazakura kana.*

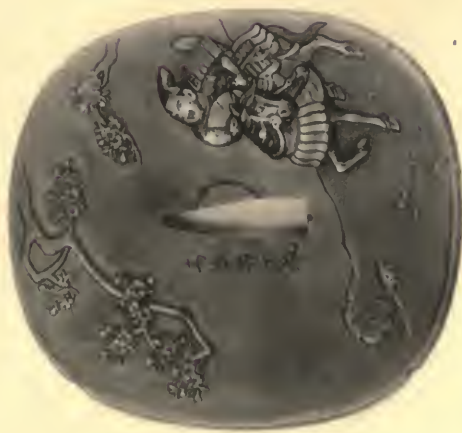
"At the gate of Nakoso, although there comes not a breath of wind, why are the mountain-paths covered with cherry-blossoms?"

There is a play upon the word Nakoso ("come not").<sup>1</sup> A few silver cherry-leaves lie upon the ground at the hero's feet, while overhead a twisted branch still retains the full-blown flowers carefully chiselled from silver with leaves of greenish gold.

The same rich palette of colored metals has been used to "paint" the decoration on Fig. 2, Plate LII, where the skill of Hidemuni as a chiseller is shown to fuller advantage than on the former tsuba. A flamed dragon with scales of gold is seen at the top emerging from a bank of clouds which had its origin in the uplifted bowl of the Chinese Chen Nan (Chinnan in Japanese). A young attendant of the Arhat looks up admiringly toward the dragon which, it is said, Chinnan was empowered to evoke at will from his calabash or bowl. The figures are modelled from silver, the draperies are of gold and shakudō etched with brocade patterns. The broken lines of chiselling with which the clouds are carved add markedly to the movement suggested.

As was observed above, certain members of the Tanaka family studied under Gotō masters, and were completely influenced by the style of their teachers. Of this group Yoshiaki is recognized as the most gifted. His pupil, Sonobe Yoshitsugu (1778-1842), carried his master's methods into all of his work. On such a piece as the kozuka (Plate LII, Fig. 3), for instance, he has recaptured the old spirit of the sixteen

<sup>1</sup> H. Joly, Legend in Japanese Art, p. 405.



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1-2, TSUBA BY TAKAMOTO HIDEMUNE (p. 143). 3-4, MOUNTS BY SONOBE ARTISTS (p. 145).

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masters of the Gotō school. Very suggestive of some of those early *mitokoromono* is the shakudō dragon, with flaming appendages of gold grasping a golden jewel, and set forth to fine effect against a gold nanako ground. The separate plate on which the decoration stands is set into a kozuka of shakudō which is inscribed, "Sonobe Yoshitsugu." Working as a chiseller to the daimyō of Yanagawa, he became a renowned artist, signing his products with the names Denzō and Tansō.

His son, named Yoshihide, inherited his father's skill in the delicate handling of metals. The tsuba (Plate LII, Fig. 4) is one of his decorative pieces (See LXI, Fig. 9, for kakihan). Not only is the bilobate form of the tsuba unusual, but also the combination of shakudō and brass for the two sides is an uncommon choice of metals. The obverse is of the darker medium, and likely is selected to represent the darkness of night passing away at the first touch of dawn suggested by the golden rays of sun rising behind clouds which are tinged with red, being sculptured from copper. Poised in flight, a graceful crane floats above the clouds. The feathered body is carefully chiselled from silver with tail-feathers of shakudō, crest of red copper, beak and legs of gold. On the sunny yellow brass reverse, two sparrows in relief of copper and shakudō flutter near a bamboo pole and rope, to which is attached a rattle commonly used to frighten away birds from the rice-fields. It is a remarkable effect which Yoshihide has produced on this highly finished work of art. One is entirely unconscious of the hard medium through which the picture is presented. On the obverse the clouds are so broken as to appear shifting and fluent, and the delicately inlaid bits of gold are as immaterial in impression as the rays of light which they represent.

## XVII. THE ŌTSUKI SCHOOL. HARUAKI HŌGEN

In making a survey of the art of the nineteenth-century metal-workers, there are certain sword-fittings which claim for themselves a dominant place on account of their beauty and freshness of appeal. These products usually are inscribed with one of the three following names: "Natsūo, Haruaki Hōgen, or Gotō Ichijō," those borne by the artists who are recognized as "the three great moderns." Each of these men developed and perfected a style distinctly his own.

Kanō Natsuō owes much of his prowess to the school known as Ōtsuki ("Great Moon"). This group was founded by Ōtsuki Kōrin, otherwise called Mitsushige, who lived in Owari in the eighteenth century. Moving to Kyōto in middle life, he and his followers worked on all types of metal ornaments, not confining themselves to sword-fittings alone. Mitsutsune and Mitsuyoshi are among his pupils, the latter being famous primarily as the father of the foremost master of the Ōtsuki school. This artist, Mitsuoki, originated the habit of writing the name Ōtsuki with the single character representing the word *tsuki* written large, *Ō* meaning "large" or "great." Names adopted by him and found on several tsuba are Ryūkudō, Shiryūdō, or Shiryū, as well as Dairyūsai or Ryūsai.

Living in the early nineteenth century in Kyōto, Mitsuoki had the advantage of studying under Ganku, the renowned painter of naturalistic subjects, who was then stationed at the imperial court. This side of his training is reflected in many of his productions, such as those adorned with birds swimming on or diving into the water, or the more simple designs of bending reeds or wind-swept grasses. Certain of his kozuka and tsuba are inscribed or inlaid with poems which subtly illuminate the subject of decoration.<sup>1</sup> Figures too he depicted with power and grace, using both the method of relief and that of katakiribori. A few of his tsuba decorated by the latter method are quite as unique in quality as the work of Yokoya Sōmin.

A striking tsuba with high reliefs is to be seen on Plate LIII, Fig. 1. It is inscribed Mitsuoki Dairyūsai. It is of a larger size than is ordinary (9.5 cm in length), and in form is square with cut corners. The body of the guard is iron covered with a velvety patina of soft brown. The subject of decoration—Watanabe encountering the demon at the gate of Rashōmon—is one which has been met with before (p. 100).

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<sup>1</sup> H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 169.

On the reverse side of the tsuba, the artist has represented a pine-branch with golden needles, rent and torn by a furious storm, which he has chiselled with deep strokes out of the iron field. It is continued on the obverse side, where the sweeping lines, denoting a strong wind, carry the attention to a swirl of clouds softly sculptured and touched with flecks of gold inlay. In the centre of this tempest, the artist has placed the copper figure of the defiant demon, swarthy and muscular, who, having recaptured her severed arm, calls down curses upon Watanabe. The hero, with whitened face in relief of silver, crouches below at the right. One can feel a tension in each of these figures which, though small in actual size, are largely conceived and executed. The flowing lines of their garments add much to the life of the decoration. The robe of the demon is sculptured from two shades of gold with a shakudō undergarment inlaid in a brocade pattern. Watanabe's stiff court-cos-tume with the flowing trousers (*shitabakama*) is chiselled from the iron and covered over with his crest (three stars over the digit "one") in-laid in gold. There is in this collection also a brass tsuba which is in-scribed as follows: "Ôtsuki Mitsuoki (kakihan) carved this after a painting by Sū Hi." The decoration and treatment is almost identical with a tsuba by Yasuchika, reproduced by L. GONSE,<sup>1</sup> which must have been inspired by the same design. Sū Hi was a famous Chinese painter of the Sung dynasty. The picture from which these two artists took their design represents two herons standing in a lotus-pond.

Mitsuoki was succeeded by his two sons, Hideoki and Atsuoki or Tokuoki, as he is sometimes called. Both of these artists seem to have preferred making the smaller mounts; only a few tsuba from their chisels are to be found. Mitsuhiro and Mitsunao are also listed as the sons of Mitsuoki.

At the same time that these artisans were producing sword-mounts, Kanō Natsuō, who was born in 1828 in Kyōto, must have been receiving his instruction in the art of metal-working from Ikeda Takanaga, who was the son of Ikeda Okitaka, one of Ôtsuki Mitsuoki's pupils. He also studied under Okumura Shōhachi of the Gotō school. Many of his realistic designs, especially those of carps arising from or descending into the water, he owes to Nakajima Raishō, with whom he studied painting. Raishō was a pupil of Okyō Maruyama, the noted painter of birds, fishes, and animals. It is recorded that Natsuō took certain of his designs direct from nature, particularly the peony, which he is said to have studied, but to have found no inclination to chisel a copy of the



flower until he chanced to see it, one day, tossed by the wind.<sup>1</sup> The tsuba in the Hawkshaw collection (No. 2487) remains to testify how completely he made this experience his own and recorded it in cold metal for all art-lovers to enjoy.

In the early years of his life, Natsuō was known as Fushimi Jisaburo and later as Jurō or Nagaaki. In 1854 he moved to Yedo, where later he was appointed chief designer for the imperial mint and also professor of metal-work in the Tōkyō art school. Many of his tsuba are made of iron softly modelled and covered over with a rich brown patina. Inlay, relief, and katakiribori were all mastered by this artist, whose products are much sought after by collectors of metal-work.

The large iron tsuba (Plate LIII, Fig. 2) is signed *Natsuō zō* ("made by Natsuō"). The riohitsu which are elongated and large recall certain of the Higo tsuba. This peculiar form and the partially outlined seppa dai are characteristic touches on several of the tsuba of Natsuō. Though his finest effects are accomplished by a low-relief sculpturing of the ground metal, the high relief and inlay in this case have combined to make an impressive decoration. At the lower right, the artist has adorned the tsuba with a fully sculptured figure of a wolf carved with fine realism from reddish bronze and standing near grasses in relief of gold. The animal, with jaws open and exposing sharp teeth, turns to look up toward a full moon inlaid in gold near clouds chiselled from the iron. The moonlit night is continued on the reverse side of the tsuba, where among bending grasses lie the bones and skull of a human being shining in relief of silver against the dark background. From this side, through one of the riohitsu, may be seen the uplifted head of the baying wolf.

This decoration, which was probably adopted from a contemporary painting, is very similar to that which has been drawn on a kozuka in the Naunton collection (No. 2353). The piece referred to is signed "Kinryūsai Hidekuni," the name of one of the pupils of Kawarabayashi Hideoki. Sometimes signing his work with the sole character for Gawa (Kawa) from his master's name, Hidekuni generally inscribed his pieces with his own name followed by Tenkwodō ("Hall of Heavenly Splendor"), likely the name of his studio. In this latter manner are signed both tsuba on Plate LIV, Figs. 1 and 2. The first example is of shibuichi with reliefs of various metals, particularly gold and shakudō, with delicate inlay of copper. Murasaki Shikibu, the famous writer and poet of the tenth century, is seen standing beneath the full moon, on

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<sup>1</sup>F. BRINKLEY, *Japan and China*, Vol. VII, p. 321.





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1, TSUBA BY ŌTSUKI MITSUOKI (p. 146). 2, TSUBA BY KANŌ NATSUŌ (p. 148).



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1-2 Tsuba by Hidekuni (p. 148). 3, Tsuba by Takechika of Ōtsuki School (p. 149).

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the portico of the temple of Ishiyama overlooking Lake Biwa. It was at this famous beauty spot that she is said to have written the novel *Genji Monogatari* (p. 58).

In comparison with most of the portraits on nineteenth-century tsuba, this figure is heavy and lacking in grace. Far more successful is the decoration on the smaller guard (Fig. 2), which is of mikkō form and made from iron beautifully patined to a rich brown tone. The body of the snarling tiger standing on the edge of a rocky cliff is carved with strength and realism. The flashing eye, the light stripes of the animal's coat, and the bamboo sprouts at his feet are all inlaid in gold, so sparingly and tastefully employed as to produce a rich effect. The gently moulded rim of the tsuba and the sweeping lines denoting wind which he has carved at the top of the guard show Hidekuni's mastery of the chisel. On the reverse side there has been flowingly sculptured a waterfall plunging over rocks, tinged with gold inlay, and breaking in curling waves with gold flecks of foam.

Takechika is the name of an artist who is placed by some authorities among the members of the Ōtsuki school. Although S. Hara lists him in his record of tsuba masters, no information is given as to his training. We simply know that he lived in Kyōto in the middle of the nineteenth century, for two tsuba made by him are dated in 1862. One is in the collection of V. Essen in Hamburg; the other, in the Dansk Kunstinstrimuseum in Copenhagen. There are four tsuba in this Museum, which are signed Takechika. One of shibuichi, adorned with a goose flying over a tossing sea, is inscribed *Issai Jungetsu* ("Intercalary month") *Jinjutsu* ("year of the dog"); that is, 1863. A second guard of shibuichi, upon which are swallows, in relief of shakudō and silver flying near a cherry-tree, is signed *Takechika Issai Koji* ("Retired Scholar"). The name Genissai is carved upon the third tsuba, which is in the form of the bag of Daikoku, god of wealth. S. Hara records that Takechika bore the titles of Tsushima no Kami, Hōgen, and Njūdō. A fourth honorary appellation is inscribed on a tsuba in this collection (Plate LIV, Fig. 3). It reads, *Shiba Yamashiro Daijo* ("Feudal chief of Shiba in Yamashiro"). This guard, which is heavy and made entirely of silver, is carved to represent two carp tied together by bamboo twigs which are inserted through the gills and pass through the mouths. The design immediately recalls the Chinese girdle ornaments of jade reproduced and fully described in B. LAUFER's "Jade" (pp. 217-219). We are told therein that this design symbolizes mutual harmony between spouses and friends. The fish of the girdle ornament are tied together with a branch of willow which it was customary to give to a friend on

parting. Thus the significance of the Chinese design reads, "though parted we shall remain friends." On this tsuba the two carp are tied together by bamboo twigs. This occurrence would lead us to think that the design on this Japanese tsuba refers rather to the brave spirit of the carp, than to the idea of harmonious association. This fish is called the samurai fish for two reasons; first, because it lies passive and immovable when its quivering live flesh is sliced off for a delicacy, just as the true samurai endures his wounds unflinchingly; second, because it swims up the waterfall, sturdily facing the strong current and overcoming all obstacles. The latter interpretation comes directly from the Chinese legend of the carp which, swimming up the cataract of the Yellow River, passes the Dragon Gate, and finally becomes a dragon itself. At the boy's festival (*tango*), which occurs on the fifth day of the fifth month in Japan, there are to be seen on the top of the houses wherein boys dwell, paper carps attached to bamboo poles. "This swimming-up the waterfall is very prettily suggested by the actual symbol; for the paper fish, tied by the head to the summit of a tall bamboo pole, indeed appears to be swimming up the bamboo (*take* in Japanese which by a play on the words is made to signify the waterfall or *taki*)."<sup>1</sup> The emblem of bravery and courage, here suggested by the association of the carp with the bamboo (*take*), naturally is most significant as the basis of a decoration for a sword-mount. Takechika has demonstrated to the full his glyptic skill in the detailed carving of this tsuba. The firm, slippery bodies of the fishes have been remarkably reproduced, while the dorsal fins lie in rippling soft lines on either edge, thereby forming the rim of the guard.

The second of the three great moderns, Haruaki or Shummei Hōgen, has given a large portion of his biography on the back of a kozuka which is in the Naunton collection (No. 2180, p. 159). The translation there given by H. JOLY of this interesting inscription reads as follows: "In the dog year of Kyōwa (1802) I began to work and signed Shunnin; in Bunkwa (1804-17), I took the name Shummei; in Bunsei (1818-29), I was given the title Hokyō, and was later raised to Hōgen. Afterwards I travelled like a cloud, sometimes to sing at Matsushima in the snow; at other times I rested in Nagasaki to admire the moon, and my name was not always the same. Now it is Tempō, the ox year (1841), on the banks of the Sumida River." Signed "Jippō Ō Shummei Hōgen." Some of the other names to which Haruaki refers are listed by S. HARA:<sup>2</sup> Bunzō or Chūzō, Shō, Nakatsukasa, Haruzumi, Getsuō, Sanzō, Fūko,

<sup>1</sup>JIRO HARADA, Go Sekku (*Transactions of Japan Soc.*, Vol. IX, p. 197).

<sup>2</sup>Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen, p. 14.



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Jippo-Kūsha, and Taiō. Fūunsanjin is a name added to the list by P. VAUTIER.<sup>1</sup>

Haruaki of the Konō family lived between the years 1786 and 1859, and was followed by many pupils, most of whose names began with the character *aki*. As mentioned before, Haruaki was a pupil of Yanagawa Naoharu, who, as may be remembered, was trained in the Yokoya school. In the excellent character of Haruaki's chiselling in katakiribori, the influence of Yokoya Sōmin is clearly to be seen, while in his reliefs there is much that suggests the methods of the Gotō school. He worked with equal skill in these processes, and accomplished many of his most decorative effects in flat inlay. His subjects for the most part are illustrations of the shichifukujin, of sages, poets, or characters taken from popular legends. Mount Fuji captured his imagination, and is beautifully interpreted on the long fields of certain kozuka and kogai. The upright decorations on the two kozuka in this collection (Plate LV, Figs. 1-2) illustrate the three methods of applying design. That in Fig. 1 is of iron adorned with a design applied in low reliefs of gold and silver. The picture represents the exterior of a house near which a plum-tree is growing. That it is the time of the New Year may be discovered by the *shimenawa* visible beneath the roof and by the charm placed beneath the eaves at the extreme right. This consists of the head of a sardine (*iwashi*) impaled upon a branch of holly (*hiragi*). Two demons who have been exorcised by the *oni yarai* ceremony (p. 96) are studying the charm, which is said to so intimidate them, that they will not re-enter the house. One of the demons cautiously stretches his three-fingered hand toward the prickly leaves.<sup>2</sup>

On the other kozuka (Plate LV, Fig. 2), which is of shakudō, the design is brought out by kebori, flat inlay, and high relief. Haruaki has here given a demonstration of the Sambaso dance (p. 124). The performer, wearing the mask of an old, bearded man with white tufted eyebrows, is crowned by the tall-ridged hat, and holds behind his head in one hand the open, folding fan,—two of the accessories necessary in this performance. The bell rattle (*suzu*) is in his left hand, and may be seen projecting beyond his lifted knee. His robe is adorned with the pine, symbol of longevity, inlaid and carefully etched in gold. The lips of the mask are made of red copper, the tying cord is gold, and the whole is realistically carved in high relief.

<sup>1</sup> Japanische Stichblätter und Schwertzierathen, Sammlung G. Oeder, No. 1237.

<sup>2</sup> For origin of this charm, see H. JOLY, Legend in Japanese Art, p. 50.

Very often tsuba made by Haruaki are found to be decorated on one side in relief, while the other side is a masterful bit of katakiribori; such is the case in the two tsuba herein illustrated. The object in Fig. 3 (Plate LV) is of copper. The rim is slightly raised and irregular, and the field is covered over with a fine ishime carving in which this master excelled. A rollicking portrait of Daikoku, one of the shichifukujin, is sculptured in high relief of shibuichi on the obverse side of the guard. Backed by a golden nimbus he stands on a cloud from which ancient coins of various types are dropping. The largest of these is of the form known as *ōban*, and is inscribed, as was customary, *Jū ryō* ("10 ryō") *Gotō* (name of the superintendent of the mint).<sup>1</sup>

Daikoku, god of wealth and probably the most popular of the shichifukujin is a Brahmanic deity, who had been added to the Buddhist pantheon in India, and therewith introduced into Japan. He represents Mahākāla ("the black god"), so called from the color of his image which it was customary to rub with oil. "Mahākāla is the protector of realms and peoples, freeing them from disorder and other calamities."<sup>2</sup> Daikoku is usually represented with rice bales which signify the wealth of the realm. From the invasion of rats, who are frequently pictured with him, he is kept busy guarding his treasure. The attributes of the jewel and the magic hammer, with the *futatsu* or *mitsu-tomoye* (p. 43) painted upon the ends, are said to have been allotted to him by Kobodaishi. Both of these emblems he holds in his hands in this portrait by Haruaki. The full inscription on the guard reads: *Haruaki Hōgen* (kakihan) *tameni Junshindō shujin* ("Made for the lord of Junshindo").

Figures 1 and 2 on Plate LVI reproduce the two sides of a tsuba of *karakane*, which has been treated with an acid bath so as to produce a "skin" of variable colors, iridescent in effect. The surface decorations on both sides are beautiful examples of finished workmanship. The obverse is a fine ishime, while the reverse is so treated as to appear to be flecked with small globules scattered over the entire surface. In reliefs of copper, silver, and shakudō, the figures of the Chinese poet Liu Hwoching (Japanese Rinnasei) and his young attendant stand under a plum-tree, watching a crane feeding from a dish in relief of copper. The tree-trunk and branches are modelled from a blending of shibuichi and copper tipped with blossoms sculptured from silver. The expressive face of Rinnasei is carved from copper, while that of the young attendant is of silver. On the reverse a weeping willow-tree is boldly cut

<sup>1</sup>N. MUNRO, *Coins of Japan*, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>F. DICKINS, *Seven Gods of Happiness* (*Transactions of Asiatic Soc. of Japan*, Vol. VIII, p. 438).



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TSUBA BY HARUAKI HŌGEN (p. 152).

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in katakiribori, its drooping branches breaking with gentle lines the upper portion of the field. Upon the tree trunk leans an aged figure. The portrait of the old man, who is probably Jurojin, one of the shichifukujin, is a charming piece of line-drawing and inlay. Around his face of silver falls the head-covering of dark blue shakudō. His under garment of silver is visible at the throat and knee; the remainder is hidden by the overdress on which a brocade pattern is suggested in kebori. At his side a child is creeping toward a blossoming chrysanthemum-bush which seems to bring pleasure to the older man, who looks admiringly at the flowers. The two faces of this tsuba combine to make it an example of the high perfection attained by certain nineteenth-century artists, and a rare illustration of the interesting motives of decoration which many of these small fields encompass.

## XVIII. GOTŌ ICHIJŌ AND HIS PUPILS

F. BRINKLEY<sup>1</sup> has forcefully said, "The occidental student of Japanese art rivets his attention on the work of the painter rather than on that of the sculptor, considers the pictorial motive in preference to the glyptic method. Now, as a rule with very rare exceptions, the decorative motives of Japanese sword-furniture were always supplied by painters. There exist innumerable volumes of designs from the brushes of more or less renowned artists, and to these the sculptor habitually referred for inspiration. All classes of art-artisans possessed such volumes, and were prepared to submit them for a customer's choice of motive. Hence it is that the Japanese connoisseur draws a clear line of distinction between the decorative design and its technical execution, crediting the former to the pictorial artist, the latter to the sculptor. The enthusiastic eulogies and poetic comparisons of the *Sōken Kishō* refer, not to the pictures chiselled on sword-guards, dagger-hafts, or hilt-tips, but to the manner of their execution. Michitaka, in common with all Japanese connoisseurs, detected in the stroke of a chisel and the lines of a graving-tool subjective beauties which appear to be hidden from the great majority of western dilettanti. He never fell into the mistake of confusing the inspirations supplied by the decorative artist with the technical achievements of the sculptor himself. However elaborate may be the decorative design, however interesting the motive, the Japanese connoisseur never forgets to look first to the chisel work. By its quality alone he estimates the rank of a specimen, just as the critic of pictures judges the authenticity of a painting by the force, directness, and delicacy of the brush strokes. This becomes more easily comprehensible when it is remembered that vigor and grace of line-drawing are the prime essentials of fine art in the eyes of a Japanese, and that his almost instinctive appreciation of those qualities in a picture equips him with a special standard for judging the excellence of sculpture, such as is found upon sword-furniture. The Japanese *dogu-bori* used thirty-six principal classes of chisel, each with its distinctive name, and as most of these classes included from five to ten sub-varieties, his cutting and graving tools aggregated about two hundred and fifty. This fact alone suffices to suggest the delicacy and elaborateness of his work."

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<sup>1</sup>Japan and China, Vol. VII, p. 228.

On first meeting with a piece from the chisel of Gotō Ichijō, though the decorative motive itself almost always commands admiration, it is the texture of the surface metal and the exquisite carvings of the reliefs on the mount which make the deepest impression. There were many remarkable craftsmen among the Gotō artists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but there was none who perfected the individual style and worked at one and the same time with such precision and grace as did Ichijō, the artist, who is generally placed with Natsuō and Haruaki Hōgen to form the triumvirate of the "three great moderns." The mounts made by the "sixteen masters," even up to the time of Hōjō, who died in 1856, and who was the last direct descendant of the line, continued to be formal and stiff. The finest pieces are almost without exception made of shakudō with nanako ground and ornamented with reliefs of gold or silver. Ichijō, on the contrary, seldom used nanako and to a large extent preferred the carefully patined background of brown iron for many of his choicest reliefs. When employing shakudō and shibuichi as the ground metals, he often so treated them as to gain novel effects, boldly gouging out his designs or chiselling away patches so to produce a roughened effect hitherto generally seen only on iron tsuba.

Born in 1789, Ichijō was a son of Kenjō, who was a direct descendant of the seventh master of the Gotō Shirobei family, though himself not one of the noted sixteen masters. Ichijō lived to the age of eighty-seven, dying, as seems fitting for the last great artist of the Gotō family, in 1876, the very year in which the samurai had to relinquish the privilege of wearing his two swords. After this period, the new order of things came in so rapidly as to sweep away much of the art which had occupied almost all of the greatest artists in metal work for five centuries. BRINKLEY<sup>1</sup> states that, when only nineteen years of age, Ichijō was commissioned to make a set of mounts for the sword of the emperor Kokaku. He succeeded so well that he received the title Hokyō together with a reward of twenty pieces of silver and five bundles of silk. At thirty-four he was called to Yedo by the shōgun, and there received a house and perpetual pension of ten rations, after which he attained the highest rank, that of Hōgen. He occasionally signed his productions with the following names: Hachirobei (a name used by Kenjō), Mitsuyuki, Mitsuyo, Ichii, Muryū, and Hakuō.

There are two tsuba by Ichijō in this collection. One of small size (6 cm in length) is inscribed, "Gotō Ichijō Hōgen, at seventy-five years

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<sup>1</sup>Japan and China, Vol. VII, p. 299.



of age, by request made this of sokanagu (an alloy) in kebori." Within the slightly raised rim the artist has etched sprays of *Lespedeza* (*hagi*) and flowering stalks of *Valeriana officinalis* (*ominameshi*). The alloy from which the tsuba is made is of gray color and lacks the beautiful sheen of shibuichi.

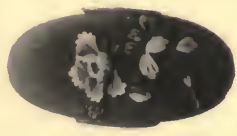
The other tsuba is a much more important example of Ichijō's work (Plate LVII, Fig. 1). It is the smaller of a pair of sword-guards made for a *dai-shō*. The larger companion tsuba of the same form and a corresponding decoration is in the Museum of Art at Toledo, Ohio. The inscription on that tsuba reads, "Made by Hakuō in early autumn of the tiger year (seventh) of Kaei;" that is, 1854 (*Hakuō saku Kaei shichi toratoshi mōshu*). The small tsuba herein reproduced is inscribed, "Made by Hakuō at Tōbu" (*Hakuō saku Tōbu oite*). Both of these inscriptions are written in cursive and the kakihan (Plate LXI, Fig. 10) on the larger one is distinctly different from that which usually follows Ichijō's name. A specimen in the Naunton Collection (No. 336) also bears this cursively written seal.

The tsuba under consideration, like its larger companion, is of iron, and is of mōkkō form. It will be noticed that by that time (1854) the early mōkkō form, which was decidedly quadrilobate (Plate VIII, Fig. 1), had been modified until it had become almost rectangular in outline with a slight indentation near each of the four corners. On the larger tsuba (in Toledo Museum of Art) there are, in relief of silver and gold, cherry-blossoms whose petals are falling among snow-flakes. On this smaller guard the flowers are those of the plum. They are likewise sculptured from silver with golden stamens and inlaid in relief, as is the crescent moon on the reverse side of the guard. The snow-crystals of various forms are scattered over the entire field which is patined to a chocolate brown color and a texture of wax-like malleability. In some cases the delicate snow-flakes are inlaid in silver; the majority, however, are reproduced in hammer-work. Occasionally only one-half of the crystal-form is clearly cut, while the remainder is only suggested and seems to be melting away under our very eyes. It may be that the application of these delicate designs was accomplished with tools on which the entire crystal form had been wrought in cameo as in the blind tooling used on book-binding or any leather work. This would in no way take away from the difficulties encountered in order to make the tsuba, for the perfecting of such tools would only be undertaken by a master. Several times did Ichijō use this poetic design of blossoms and snow-flakes for the decoration of sword-mounts. The large tsuba by him which





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1-2, MOUNTS BY GOTŌ ICHIJŌ (p. 156). 3, TSUBA BY FUNADA IKKIN (p. 157).

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is reproduced by S. HARA,<sup>1</sup> though of brown bronze, is adorned with cherry-blossoms and snow-flakes beneath a crescent moon of gold. Again, the same design appears on a tsuba owned by M. Garbutt and reproduced by H. JOLY.<sup>2</sup> It is of shibuichi and copper, mi-parti (back and front) and inlaid with crystals and cherry-blossoms. On this guard, which is dated "third year of Tempō" (that is, 1832), the crystals are all in relief. A third tsuba on which this design appears on a more minute scale, is of shakudō, and is in the collection of G. Naunton (No. 334). A fourth in the W. Behrens collection (No. 2019) is of shakudō and decorated solely with snow-crystals in hammer-work.

Characteristic of the best work of the Gotō school is the fuchikashira (Plate LVII, Fig. 2), which is signed "Gotō Ichijō Hokyō." It is of shakudō with nanako disposed in straight lines and adorned with sprays and blossoms of the peony (*botan*), in relief of gold with sparing inlays of copper on the shakudō foliage. Though formal to a certain degree, there is evidenced on this piece the graceful handling and placing of the decorative motive which make for much of the charm of Ichijō's mounts.

Gotō Ichijō had a large number of pupils, twenty-two of whom are named by A. MOSLÉ<sup>3</sup> in his genealogical table of the Gotō Family. Among them none won and deserved a higher reputation than Funada Yoshinaga or Ikkin, as he sometimes signed his mounts, an artist, who died in 1862. He was an adopted son of Funada Kwanjo of the Iwamoto school, but received his training from Gotō Ichijō. A tsuba made by him is reproduced side by side with the two pieces of his master which have just been described (Plate LVII, Fig. 3). It is of wakizashi size and made of shibuichi with a patina of greenish gray, and is of a common form being slightly narrower at the top than at the base. The whole surface within the raised rim is covered over with a fine ishime, save where the reliefs are placed on the obverse, and a small portion on the reverse which represents the shore line at Mio-no-Matsubara. This famous beauty spot is suggested in nanako with reliefs of shakudō and gold in the form of gnarled pine-trees, at whose roots curling waves of silver break and cast up tiny shells of gold and silver. On the obverse at the top, the cone of Fujiyama emerges from the surrounding fields. The volcanic ash lying along the sloping sides near the summit is represented by an inlay of copper of soft reddish hue broken by streaks of silver realistically suggesting deep snow-patches. At the foot of the

<sup>1</sup>Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen (Plate facing p. 1).

<sup>2</sup>Japanese Art and Handicraft (Plate cxiv, Fig. 279).

<sup>3</sup>The Sword Ornaments of the Gotō Shirobei Family (*Transactions of the Japan Society*, Vol. VII, p. 208).

mountain floats a cloud of silver on which is standing the figure of Fukurokuju (p. 110), holding his staff in his left hand and raising his outspread right hand as he gazes upward toward the peak. This minute representation of the god of longevity, happiness, and good luck is entirely sculptured from gold; his upper garment rippling backward in the wind is delicately ornamented in kebori suggesting a brocade pattern.

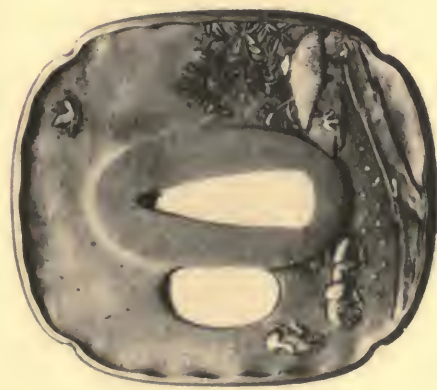
Fukui Ichiju, another pupil of Ichijō, is the maker of the tsuba on Plate LVIII (Figs. 1 and 2), which is signed, "Made by Fukui Ichiju in April, second year (snake year) of Meiji;" that is, 1869. (*Fukui Ichiju Meiji ni mizunotono mi uzuki saku*). Adopting the modified mōkkō form with the raised rim, characteristic of his master's guards, Ichiju has produced an interesting tsuba from brown iron. On the reverse, a group of peasants stand in a rice-field, two gathering the ripened plants, while a third looks up toward a flying cuckoo. A low hut with thatched roof stands upon the small plot of ground at the end of the raised path which outlines the rice-field. A spray of flowering *Lespedeza* (*hagi*) is carved in relief at the right side of the tsuba. The inlays and reliefs, such as the scattered clouds, the rice-plants, the peasants' head-coverings, and the cords (*tasuki*) which tie back the sleeves are of gold. On the reverse, the sole decoration is a poem paper (*tanzaku*), also in relief of gold. On this is inscribed, *Fūryū no hajime ya oku no ta ue uta* [by] *Ichi Getsu*. It is impossible to give a translation of this delicate sentiment written in the epigrammatic form known as *hokku*.<sup>1</sup> It might be construed thus: "The first refined presentation of the rice-planting song," and was doubtless inspired by the sight of farmers singing at their planting in the midst of a peaceful landscape causing one to put aside mercenary interest and rejoice in the æsthetic appeal made by the song sung in the midst of nature.

The mōkkō-formed tsuba (Plate LVIII, Fig. 3) is the work of Fukawa Kazunori, a follower of Ichijō, who lived until 1876. His adopted names Ryūashi and Koryūsai help to distinguish his sword-mounts from those of three other nineteenth-century metalworkers, who also bore the name Kazunori and wrote it in the same form. There is in the collection of J. O. Pelton a tsuba signed Koryūsai Kazunori, which is thought to be the companion piece to the one under discussion.<sup>2</sup> Both guards are of shakudō; the one in the collection of Field Museum has a rare, dark blue color and a patina of satin-like smoothness. No other metals are used to enhance the tsuba; the bold

<sup>1</sup> Cf. CHAMBERLAIN, *Japanese Poetry*, pp. 147-260.

<sup>2</sup> H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 130.





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1-2, TSUBA BY FUKUI ICHIJU. 3, TSUBA BY KAZUNORI (p. 158).

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and simple design of the worm-eaten mulberry-leaf near which a frog is squatting is brought out in a medium relief and carving of the shakudō. H. JOLY<sup>1</sup> mentions the fact that Fukawa Kazunori was a pupil of Hokusai. Certain of his designs he took from Tanyū Hōin, as he himself tells us on a tsuba in the Gonse collection.<sup>2</sup> Tanyū, who lived in the seventeenth century, was one of the most famous artists of the Kanō school. His impressionistic paintings furnished many artists in metal-work with designs which they sought to reproduce on the limited fields of tsuba or kozuka.

Such is true of the decorative motive on the small tsuba for a tanto, which may be studied on Plate LIX, Fig. 1.<sup>3</sup> On the rim neatly inlaid in gold is the acknowledgment "From a design by Tanyū Hōin, sixty-nine years old" (*Tanyū Hōin gyōnen rokujuku sai*). The tsuba is signed on the obverse, *Gotō Sei i* (kakihan). On the reverse is written, "On a spring day of the year of the rat"; that is, 1864 (*Kinoene shunjitsu*). Though evidently unknown to S. Hara, and not listed among the Gotō by A. Moslé, Gotō Seii is placed by H. JOLY<sup>4</sup> among the followers of Ichijō. The design on this tsuba of shakudō is inlaid in reliefs of various metals. The silver moon (*tsuki*) near the raised rim is surrounded by a feathery cloud reproduced by the inlay of minute flakes of gold which spread over the reverse side of the tsuba. On the obverse side, below at the right, is a small hare (*usagi*), sculptured from gray shibuichi, with eyes of silver. It crouches near brown bamboo-leaves, carved from copper and laden with dew-drops in gold. On the reverse two unfolded fern sprouts (*waraji*) in relief of green gold complete this simple presentation of the popular subject *tsuki ni usagi*.

"The hare in Japanese pictures is nearly always represented in association with a full moon. This connection of ideas, illustrated also in the name *sason* ('the leaping one'), which denotes the moon in Sanskrit inscriptions, is of very ancient date, and is supposed to have been suggested by a fancied resemblance between the form of the animal and the outline of certain marks visible upon the disk of our satellite. In Taoist legends the hare is also placed in the moon, and is represented as engaged in pounding with pestle and mortar the drugs that compose the elixir of life.

<sup>1</sup>H. JOLY and K. TOMITA, *Japanese Art and Handicraft*, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>S. HARA, *Die Meister der japanischen Schwertzierathen*, p. 47.

<sup>3</sup>The same design evidently formed the basis for the decoration of a brass guard in this collection, which is signed with the seal of Yoshiyuki (see Plate LXI, Fig. 11).

<sup>4</sup>Sword Fittings in the Naunton Collection, No. 410.

"Many curious superstitions, some of Indian origin, attach to the hare in Sinico-Japanese folk-lore. Like the fox, the tortoise, the crane, and the tiger, it is supposed to attain a fabulous longevity—one thousand years—and to become white at the end of one-half of its term; but it is neither credited with supernatural powers, like the fox and tiger, nor consecrated as an emblem of long life, like the tortoise and crane."<sup>1</sup>

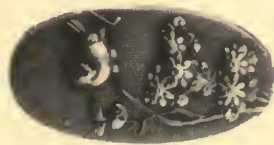
One also recalls the Buddhist legend, one of the birth stories (*Jātaka*) in which the hare (Buddha) casts himself into the fire in order to feed the Brahman. As a reward for his sacrifice, the hare was transported to the moon.

Many of the contemporaries and followers of Gotō Ichijō excelled in the making of beautiful fuchikashira and kozuka. One of the most original and at the same time accomplished pupils was Araki Tōmei, known also as Shōgintei and Ginshōtei. His minutely carved reliefs representing millet heads generally made from gold and placed upon a shakudō-nanako ground, are among the most desirable examples of middle nineteenth-century sword-mounts. Gotō Mitsuyasu, whom S. Hara places in the nineteenth century and A. Moslé in the eighteenth century, is the author of the fuchikashira (Plate LIX, Fig. 2) of shakudō. On the clamp a pheasant in relief of gold, copper and shakudō stands near blooming plants of the chrysanthemum (*kiku*) and violet (*sumire*) delicately chiselled from various metals. On the kashira, a sparrow (of copper, with breast of silver) clings to a bare twig beneath which are sprays of chrysanthemum flowers. Hashimoto Isshin, a pupil of Ichijō, who lived until 1896, is the name inscribed upon another shakudō-nanako fuchikashira, which is adorned with sprays of garden pinks over which swallows are flying.

The object in Fig. 3 on Plate LIX, though signed Ichijō, is thought to be the product of one of that master's pupils. It is interesting to compare the relief on this piece with that on the kozuka on Plate XIII, Fig. 4. While the latter mount is adorned with a sculpturing of the Ni-ō with tightly compressed lips, generally interpreted as representing an incarnation of Brahma (see p. 64), the clamp on this fuchikashira (Plate LIX, Fig. 3) is ornamented with the Ni-ō with open mouth, who is said to represent the incarnation of Indra. As in the case of the relief on the kozuka, copper has here been employed to reproduce the muscular figure of the temple guardian. Gold has been utilized for the lower garment and the floating shoulder-drape. The two artists must have found the inspiration for their designs at the same source, probably

<sup>1</sup>W. ANDERSON, Catalogue of Japanese and Chinese Paintings in the British Museum, p. 257.





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1, TSUBA BY GOTÔ SEI (p. 159). 2-3, FUCHIKASHIRA BY GOTÔ MITSUYASU AND ICHIUÔ (p. 160).

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TSUBA BY MIYATA NOBUHISA (p. 161).

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a noted pair of drawings or two sculptured figures at the entrance of a temple.

Before closing this necessarily incomplete survey of the schools of metal workers (for only those members represented in this collection have been touched upon, scores remaining whose work is equally valuable and interesting), one more piece will be added to demonstrate once again the purely decorative quality of the sword-mounts of the late Tokugawa period, just prior to the time of the relinquishment of the samurai's valued weapon. The tsuba (Plate LX) signed *Nobuhisa saku* ("made by Nobuhisa") is literally a piece of jewelry. Such sword-mounts are the nearest approach to our interpretation of that term; for rings, buckles, or similar personal ornaments were never worn in Japan prior to the influx of European trade.

Miyata Nobuhisa was a pupil of Miyata Nobukiyo, who in turn had studied under Gotô Mitsuyasu. On another tsuba in this collection, he has inscribed, together with his full name, three characters which read "Ryūjusai." That tsuba is of bronze ornamented with a plum-tree in relief laden with snow, the latter being reproduced by silver inlay. Sparrows realistically sculptured from copper escape from a hawk and seek safety in snow-laden rushes on the reverse side. In the tsuba on Plate LX, Nobuhisa has combined the two metals, silver and shakudō, to give the impression of day and night. The day is represented by a glimpse of the bay of Suruga at Mio-no-Matsubara, the pine-clad point celebrated both in poetry and art. Broken clouds tinged with gold, inlaid in imitation of *nashiji* lacquer, float over the bay. Beneath the pines carved from shakudō and copper, two boats are moored near the shore. From this point of land one of the finest views of Fuji may be obtained. The matchless mountain is pictured on the obverse side of the tsuba in relief with an inlay of silver to represent the snow-covered cone. From the dark blue shakudō ground it rises above rolling clouds inlaid in relief of gold, partly represented in the solid metal and partly by the inlay of tiny flakes which sparkle against the dark background. A tossing sea, carved in relief from the shakudō, breaks over the lower part of the tsuba, the waves tossing off golden flecks of foam. At the left, a dragon is boldly emerging from the waves and rising through clouds toward the mountain. This oft-repeated motive of decoration has been interpreted as suggesting the struggle of the earthly toward the ideal, and again as symbolic of success in life. Seldom has it been presented with more skill than on this tsuba by Nobuhisa. The writhing form of the dragon is sculptured with great care from gold, the scales chiselled

so clearly as to appear imbricated and in motion. The flaming appendage above the three-clawed arm is made of red copper, and is a brilliant touch of color against the unusually dark blue shakudō field. On this tsuba the full palette of the nineteenth-century artist in metal work is exposed; the style of the ornamentation is typical of the rich Tokugawa period wherein luxurious excesses engulfed to a very large extent the purer art of the earlier centuries.

## APPENDIX

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE RESTORATION OF PATINA

By HENRY W. NICHOLS  
Associate Curator of Geology

The patina on iron Japanese sword-guards is essentially composed of oxides of iron combined or mixed with vegetable oils. Many of the lighter colored ones contain no other ingredient. Others are colored by the addition of small quantities of copper salts, sulphides of iron, or vegetable extractive matters which darken the color. The original formulas employed by the Japanese artisans cannot be conveniently used for the restoration of lost patina, as the time consumed is inordinately long. Much labor is also involved in numerous polishings, and substances are employed not readily obtained in this country. A study of these processes suggested that their essential features might be so applied as to produce results in a reasonable time and in a way that would be practical under Western conditions. Experiments along these lines were successful, and a number of guards were treated. With the experience gained it was found that identical results could be secured by using more modern methods of oxidation at a great saving of time and labor and with more certainty of results.

METHOD I.—One of the first successful treatments was based on a Japanese method in which the object was buried in moist wood-ashes in which there was also buried a bag of sulphur. The Japanese removed the guard from time to time, and polished it with vegetable oil and reburied it.

To secure these results more expeditiously the guard is first cleaned by boiling in cigar ashes and water. Then a bath is prepared by boiling a mixture of cigar ash and sulphur in water until the solution turns yellow and emits a sulphide odor. The specimen suspended on a cord is immersed in this for an hour, then removed and allowed to dry; when dry, it is immersed for another hour, and the treatment repeated until there is a good coat of rust. The guard is then dried and polished with a bit of absorbent cotton or muslin which is made slightly greasy with olive oil or better with a light mineral oil. The specimen darkens under this treatment, and much of the oxide rubs off. The polishing is continued with dry clean cotton or muslin until no more rust rubs off. The speci-



men is then returned to the bath, and the treatment is repeated as often as necessary. In from two weeks to a month many of the guards will take a good patina, of a moderately dark chocolate. The proportions of sulphur and cigar ash are not given, as this method has not been employed long enough to determine the best proportions. This process works well with most specimens, but has several defects. There is a rather narrow limit to the colors that can be produced. The longer the treatment, the darker the patina. The process takes too much time and too much polishing. On many specimens the rust is not sufficiently adherent, and most of it comes off when polishing. These must be treated by other methods.

METHOD II.—This is based on a Japanese method using plum vinegar, verdigris, and other materials. To prepare the bath, make two liters of five per cent solution of acetic acid, add nitric acid to a strength of two per cent, about two grams of potassium nitrate, ten grams of copper sulphate, and a small quantity, say five grams, of ferrous sulphate. Clean the guard by boiling in a weak solution of caustic potash or in cigar ash and water. Attach a copper wire, and to the other end of the wire attach an electric light carbon. Suspend the guard and the light carbon in the bath and leave for several hours over night. Dry and polish with a slightly oiled cloth, and repeat treatment as necessary. To darken, immerse in a glass or porcelain vessel in a dilute solution of yellow potassium sulphide and repolish. It takes some experience to tell how long to leave the specimen in this bath, for the color that appears first is much darker than the color after drying, oiling, and polishing. If the color is too dark, it may be lightened by the careful application of the blue flame of a bunsen burner which oxidizes the sulphide. This method is more expeditious than the other, and any color may be obtained by it. On some specimens an adherent coating will not form, and these cannot be treated this way. This treatment will not injure any alloy inlays, as they can be polished bright if desired, although the tarnish they assume will usually be near their original patina.

METHOD III.—By this method which departs more widely from Japanese practice, the same patina may be formed more expeditiously. The guard is laid on a clay triangle on a lampstand, and is heated from above with the blue flame of a bunsen burner until the iron hisses when touched with the moist finger. Then a two to five per cent solution of nitric acid containing a little ferric nitrate is rapidly brushed over it until a sufficient coating is produced, or until experience shows that it is advisable to stop. The coating is then further heated from above



with the bunsen burner to decompose the nitrate of iron. Then, after the specimen is partly cool, it is brushed over with a light mineral oil. After it is completely cool, it is oiled and polished with a soft cloth. Frequently this is all that is necessary. At other times the patina is too thin, and the process must be repeated, or an oil treatment along the lines of Method IV must be given. This produces a light chocolate patina in most cases. To darken the patina, two methods are available. A continuation of the oil treatment of Method IV is often sufficient, or a sulphide treatment may be employed. The guard is immersed in dilute yellow ammonium sulphide for several hours. When dried, it is cleaned and oiled with a soft cloth, and the color examined. If too light, the treatment is repeated. If, as is commonly the case, it is too dark, it is placed on a clay triangle on a lampstand, and the surface is cautiously oxidized by the flame of a bunsen burner until the desired color is obtained, when the specimen is given its final oiling and polishing.

It is not as difficult as it seems to oxidize the proper amount of sulphide to give the desired color; yet it is a matter that requires some practice. This treatment is successful with most specimens. Occasionally one will be found that will not form an adherent coating, and some one of several artifices must be employed. Perhaps the best is to add a small quantity of sulphate of copper to the acid. If care is used, this method may be employed on specimens that have some inlays of alloy, although, if there is much inlay, it is safer to employ Method II.

METHOD IV.—When irons are free from inlay of other metals, they may frequently be given a patina by a simple heat and oil treatment. The specimen is heated on a clay triangle on a lampstand, and when hot enough to cause the oil to smoke freely, it is brushed over with a light mineral lubricating oil. The oil used is subjected to the action of the bunsen flame which is adjusted to be as oxidizing as possible. This evaporates the oil, so that there is little or no carbonized residue left, but at the same time it darkens the oxide coating, either by partially reducing it, or by changing its physical condition. It also causes the patina to adhere firmly. The color may be adjusted by sulphide treatment as in Method III. After either of these treatments, several oilings some weeks apart are needed before the pores are so filled that further rusting does not occur. The guards do not all react alike to treatment, and the process must be varied to suit individual specimens as experience dictates.

The patina produced is identical with the original patina. The body

is oxide of iron corroded from the specimen itself and combined with oil. Adhesion and evenness of coating is promoted when necessary by use of copper salts. Color is modified by modifications of the oil treatments and by the incorporation of small quantities of sulphur. A Japanese method of darkening color by use of the tannins and extractive matter of tea leaves or plum vinegar has not yet been successfully applied. By the third method, with a little practice, it is often possible to restore patina to a scratch or other small injury without affecting the original patina on the rest of the specimen. The kind of oil used in forming the patina and in the later care of the specimens is a matter of importance. The Japanese use a vegetable oil. A vegetable oil of corresponding qualities which is readily obtainable in this country undoubtedly exists, but has not yet been employed here. Cotton-seed and olive oils form a gummy surface, and injure the appearance of the patina. Very satisfactory results have been obtained by the use of certain mineral oils. The best so far employed are the lighter grades of automobile cylinder oil and pure mineral spindle oils. Oils of the grade of sewing-machine oils and those which are supposed to remove rust must be avoided.

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- \*Masaharu 正春 of Bushū Tsuba of shibuichi with *ishime* ground. Chrysanthemums and leaves in low relief of shibuichi, gold, and copper. Cat. No. 131129.
- \*Masaharu Teradō 正立寺 (dō in katakana) Tsuba of bronze *mokume* surface. In flat inlay of silver and kebori, dragon-flies, and a wasp. Cat. No. 130799.
- \*Masahide Seiryūken 政秀生柳軒 Tsuba of iron with reliefs of copper and gold. Chokwaro releasing his horse from calabash. Cat. No. 130848.
- \*Masahiro Itō 正廣伊藤 Fuchikashira of shakudō with reliefs and inlay of silver and gold. Peony blossoms and lion beneath a golden moon. Cat. No. 131395.
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- \*Masamitsu Hakujusai 正充白壽齋 Tsuba of iron. A pine-tree carved in the round with sparing inlay of gold on the bark. Cat. No. 131290.
- \*Masamitsu Hayashi 正光林 Tsuba of iron. On obverse, in relief of gilded copper, a crane alighting near rushes. Signed: Masamitsu Hayashi. On the reverse, a silver moon inlaid in breaking clouds above a fish net stretched on a pole. Signed: Mitsunaga 光壽. Cat. No. 131279.
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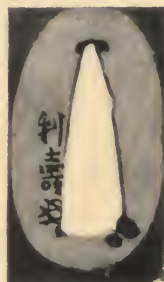
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*Noritoshi Shoji 德敏庄司 Tsuba of shibuichi with reliefs of copper, silver, and gold. The attendants of Fudō standing on cliffs above a waterfall beneath clouds sculptured from shibuichi. (H. Joly lists this artist among the nineteenth-century Hamano artists. See Naunton Coll. No. 1599.) Cat. No. 130671.	
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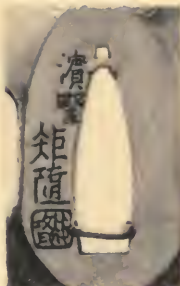
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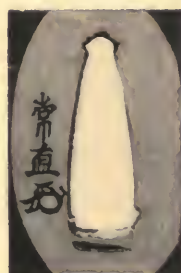
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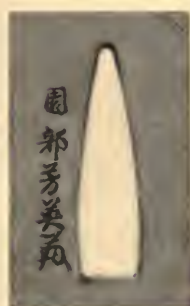
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